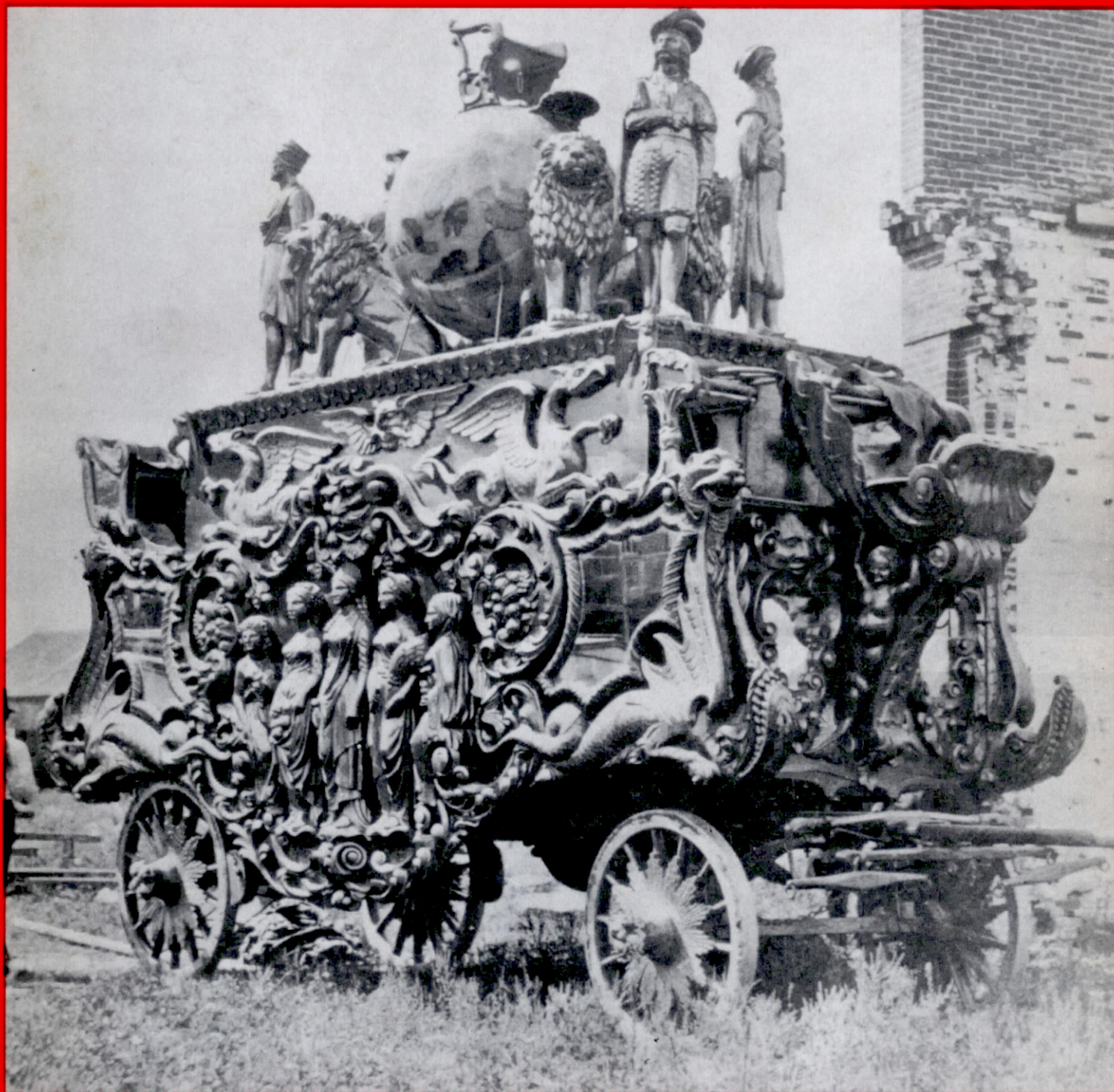


# BANDWAGON

JANUARY - FEBRUARY 1970



From original photo in collection of Wes Herwig

## FOUND AT LAST!





CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S

# BANDWAGON



Vol. 14, No. 1

January-February 1970

Fred D. Pfening, Jr., Editor

Richard E. Conover, Editorial Consultant

Joseph T. Bradbury, Fred D. Pfening, III Associate Editors

Published bi-monthly by the Circus Historical Society, Inc. Publication, Advertising and Circulation office located at 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43221. Advertising rates: Full page \$35.00; Half page \$18.50; Quarter page \$10.00. Minimum ad \$8.00.

Annual subscription fees for the Bandwagon are \$6.00 and are due each May 1. Subscriptions received during the year will be charged the following: Those received in May-June, \$6.00; July-August \$5.00; September-October, \$4.00; November-December, \$3.00; January-February, \$2.00 and March-April, \$1.00. Single copies \$1.00. Some back issues available at \$1.00 each.

**CIRCUS HISTORICAL SOCIETY, INC.,** Charles W. "Chang" Reynolds, President, 1706 Wagner St., Pasadena, Calif. 91106; Fred D. Pfening, III, Vice President, 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43221; Julian Jimenez, Treasurer, 1325 Commercial St., Atchison, Kansas 66002; Verne G. Fussell, Secretary, 3120 C Ave., Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52402.

**DIRECTORS, DIV. 1** — Fred D. Pfening, Jr., 2515 Dorset Rd., Columbus, Ohio 43221 (Mich., Ohio, Ind.); **DIV. 2** — Stephen Sullivan, 148 County St., Attleboro, Mass. (Maine, Vt., N.H., Mass., R.I., Conn., Del.); **DIV. 3** — James Hassan, Elderberry & Chestnut Alley, Milford, Pa. 18337 (N.J., N.Y., Penna., Va., Md., Wash. D.C., W. Va., Ky.); **DIV. 4** — Thomas A. White, 4320 Kelnepa Dr., Jacksonville, Fla. 32207 (N.C., S.C., Ga., Ala., Fla., Miss., Tenn., Ark., La.); **DIV. 5** — Orlo J. Rahn, 405 S. Lincoln Ave., Davenport, Iowa 52804 (Wisc., Ill., Minn., Iowa, Mo.); **DIV. 6** — Ned E. Achison, 217 E. Walnut, Columbus, Kan. 66725 (N.D., S.D., Nebr., Kan., Okla., Tex.); **DIV. 7** — Glenn R. Draper, 727 Albion, Burley, Idaho 83318 (Mont., Ida., Wyo., Colo., N.M., Utah, Nev., Ariz.); **DIV. 8** — Robert S. MacDougall, 16600 Kelsloan St., Van Nuys, Calif. 91406 (Wash., Ore., Calif., Hawaii); **DIV. 9** — Edward W. Cripps, 159 Morrell St., Brantford, Ont., Canada (Canada).

## 1970 Convention in Baraboo

The 1970 convention of the Circus Historical Society will again be held in Baraboo, Wisconsin.

The exact dates have not been set, but it will be just prior to the loading of the train for the trip to Milwaukee and the July 4th parade.

Complete details will appear in the March-April issue.

## BOB TABER OFFERS

Old Fan Papers  
Band Wagons to '43  
White Tops to '31  
Circus Reviews  
Southern Saw dust

\$1 gets list with 6 John Strong  
Circus photos.

He is going East in 1970

3668 Comer Ave.  
Riverside, Calif.

## NEW MEMBERS

- No. 1823 Russell T. Warner  
802 S. 29th St.  
Harrisburg, Penna. 17111
- No. 1824 William E. Metzger  
131 Brighton Ave.  
Wilmington, Del. 19805
- No. 1825 David Harry Knoderer  
103 N. Reuter Ave.  
Arlington Hts. Ill. 60005
- No. 1826 Belford South  
5017 Little Richmond Dr.  
Dayton, Ohio 45206

- No. 1827 Melvin Schwartz, M.D.  
P. O. Box 278  
McKeesport, Penna. 15134
- No. 1828 Jerome A. Braa  
1849 Las Vegas Blvd.  
North Las Vegas, Nev.  
89030
- No. 1829 Harold F. Sturgess  
5401 F. St.  
Sacramento, Calif. 95819
- No. 1830 Thomas Linley  
13028 Budlong Ave.  
Gardena, Calif. 90247

## FATHER SULLIVAN IS DEAD

Edward S. Sullivan worked as a young man at the Benson Wild Animal Farm, it was here that he met circus people who purchased animals. He entered the priesthood, and his interest and love in the circus grew deeper.

For 45 years he followed the white tops, performing weddings and baptisms, hearing confessions and generally counseling circus people. Some years ago he developed an interest in photography and his circus movies were shown on backlots and at fan meetings.

Father Ed was the chaplain of the Ringling Barnum circus, the Circus Fans Association and the Boston Fire department. His personal auto was equipped with a red flasher light on top and a short wave radio inside. It was in this car that a heart attack struck him while driving slowly along the train of the Ringling Barnum Blue unit on January 11, 1970, in Venice, Florida. He was about to bless the train before it pulled out for its first move of the 100th anniversary tour.

Rev. Sullivan, 72, was a member of the CHS and was a close friend of many. He had been in Venice visiting and photographing the show during its opening stand.

Services were held at the church where he was assistant pastor, Star of the Sea, Quincy, Mass. He shall be long remembered by those of all faiths. — Fred D. Pfening, Jr.

## Contortion — Acrobatic — Handbalancing — Circus

## PHOTOGRAPHS

From Europe, over 40,000 photographs to choose from.

Your selection of subject 30c per print.

Also Movie Film of contortion for sale \$50.00 each.

Alois Lechowski  
732 Gropinger-Manzen  
Schieferstrasse 23, W. Germany



## THIS MONTH'S COVER

by Joseph T. Bradbury, Associate Editor

Appearing on the front cover is undoubtedly the rarest photograph ever printed in **The Bandwagon**. This magnificent view shows the famous Five Graces wagon on the Adam Forepaugh Shows' lot at Northfield, Vermont, Sept. 9, 1970. This is the only known photograph of the wagon in its original form with the globe and carved figures at the top. Historians for years have been searching for such a photo. Heading the list of searchers has been Richard E. Conover of Xenia, Ohio who did such a marvelous history of the Five Graces wagon in his recently published book, **The Fielding Bandchariots**. However, Conover failed to turn up the long sought after photograph so he could use it for illustration in his book. Your associate editor has also been on the trail of this illusive photo for many seasons and the search did not end until recently when CHS member Wes Herwig of Randolph Center, Vt. wrote and advised me that he had in his collection a photograph of the Five Graces wagon in its original form. He very kindly loaned me the shot to have printed on the front cover of **The Bandwagon**, the only proper and fitting place for this rare treasure so important to circus history.

At my suggestion we decided to spring a pleasant surprise on our old friend and fellow historian, Dick Conover, by keeping the discovery of this great photograph a "deep dark secret" until it could be run on the front cover of **The Bandwagon**. Conover will see it for the first time when he opens his copy and I'm sure his reaction will be the same as was mine — back flip flaps around the hippodrome track.

We of **The Bandwagon** staff wish to express our sincere appreciation to Wes Herwig for his kindness in making the photograph available so it can be viewed and enjoyed by all CHS members.

## BACK ISSUES BANDWAGON MAGAZINE

1961	March-April Sept.-Oct.-Nov. December
1962	July-August November-December
1963	January-February March-April July-August November-December
1964	January-February March-April July-August September-October November-December
1965	January-February March-April May-June November-December
1966	All six issues.
1967	All six issues.
1968	To date.

The above issues are available but we have only a few of some. Refunds will be sent, when an issue is depleted. While they last \$1.00 each, we pay postage.

Bandwagon Magazine  
2515 Dorset Rd.  
Columbus, Ohio 43221

## CIRCUS FANS - CIRCUS AND VARIETY ARTISTS

# ORGAN

## Show-Business

For further information,  
contact the publisher  
or ORGAN's  
American Representative:

**WILLIAM B. HALL, III**  
138 Frog Hollow Road  
CHURCHVILLE, Pa. 18966  
Tel.: AC 215 357-5189

**ORGAN,**  
678 Pirmasens, P.O.B. 527  
(W.-Germany)

The ORGAN IS THE WORLD'S LEADING MONTHLY PUBLICATION FOR CIRCUS AND VARIETY.

It is an indispensable tool of information for circus fans, artists, agents and directors — everywhere!

The ORGAN contains contributions in German, English, and French and is distributed world-wide. The magazine's address lists represent a "Who's Who" in the world of the circus and variety.

There are about 50 pages of news columns, stories and pictures in an average edition, and 100 pages of advertisements, many on multi-colored art paper.

The Yellow Pages of ORGAN offer the programs of all great international circuses and varieties from throughout the world.





*Foreword: The Bandwagon staff appreciates the many inquiries and interest shown in the following article over the past few years. As a word of explanation to those not aware of the situation this article was originally planned to be the second half of the overall history of the Sparks Circus of 1946-47 which was operated by James Edgar to be written by CHS William L. Elbirn. Elbirn completed the first part covering the 1946 motorized show and it was printed in the Nov.-Dec. 1964 Bandwagon. In conjunction with the initial article the Bandwagon staff prepared a "Brief History of the Sparks family and title" to acquaint the reader with the past history of this famous old show. The second part covering the 1947 Sparks railroad show was to follow shortly thereafter but before Elbirn could complete the article he joined the advance of the Clyde Beatty-Cole Bros. Circus and soon found himself too busy to finish it. He sent me all of his considerable research file and I was selected by the editor*

*to complete the article. Due to many prior commitments, namely the lengthy Cole history, I was not able to work on the article until only recently. There has been a great deal of interest in the 1947 Sparks show because it was the last under canvas railroad show to be built new from the ground up and until the appearance of the Ringling Blue train in 1969 was the last newly built flat car type circus of any kind. The above mentioned Nov.-Dec. 1964 Bandwagon is still in print and copies may be obtained from the editor. Information contained in the initial article will not be repeated. The 1947 story will be told in two parts with conclusion to appear in the Mar.-April issue. This*

Photo No. 4 — Sparks Circus sleepers parked on siding at Windsor, Ontario, May 5, 1947. Fourth car in foreground is No. 86, executive sleeper leased from Ringling-Barnum, which arrived on the show two days earlier at Toledo, Ohio to be used during the Canadian tour. Pfening Collection

article will begin with the framing of the new railroad show in the winter of 1946-47 after the motorized show had closed the 1946 season and most of it's equipment sold.

#### Part I

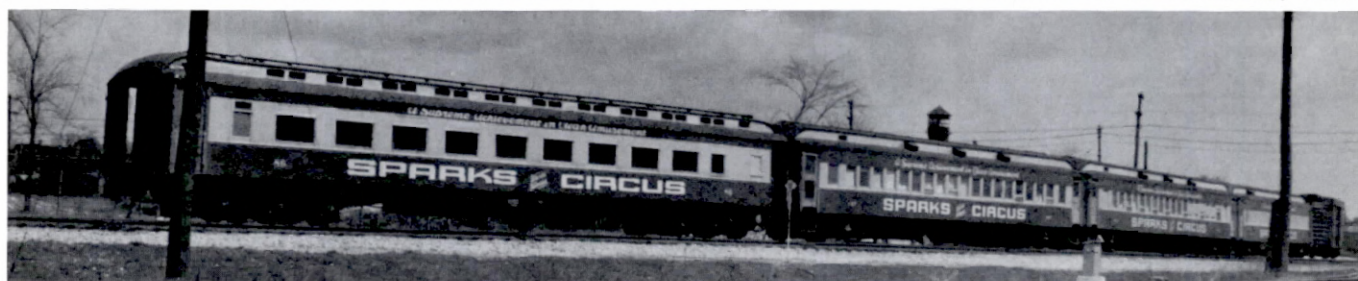
Exactly when James Edgar decided to put his Sparks Circus on rails for the 1947 season is not known, however it is obvious this decision was made several months prior to close of the 1946 season. Charlie Webb recalls that when he visited Edgar and the show at Lowell, Mass. on July 23, 1946 he asked for a job and upon being told there were no vacancies at the time started to leave but Edgar called him back and asked him to stay with the show because they were going on rails the next season and he would like him to be the boss canvasser.

Conditions generally were still rough on motorized circuses in 1946. World War II had been over only a few months and it would take several years for industry to fully convert to a peace time basis and start turning out sufficient quantities of badly needed equipment. New trucks were almost impossible to obtain and the old and worn vehicles motorized show operators had to contend with caused headaches throughout the season. Several former truck shows were now on rails, such as Clyde Beatty and Dailey Bros. and were having great success. Edgar determined to sell off his truck equipment following the 1946 season and join the ranks of the railers the next season.

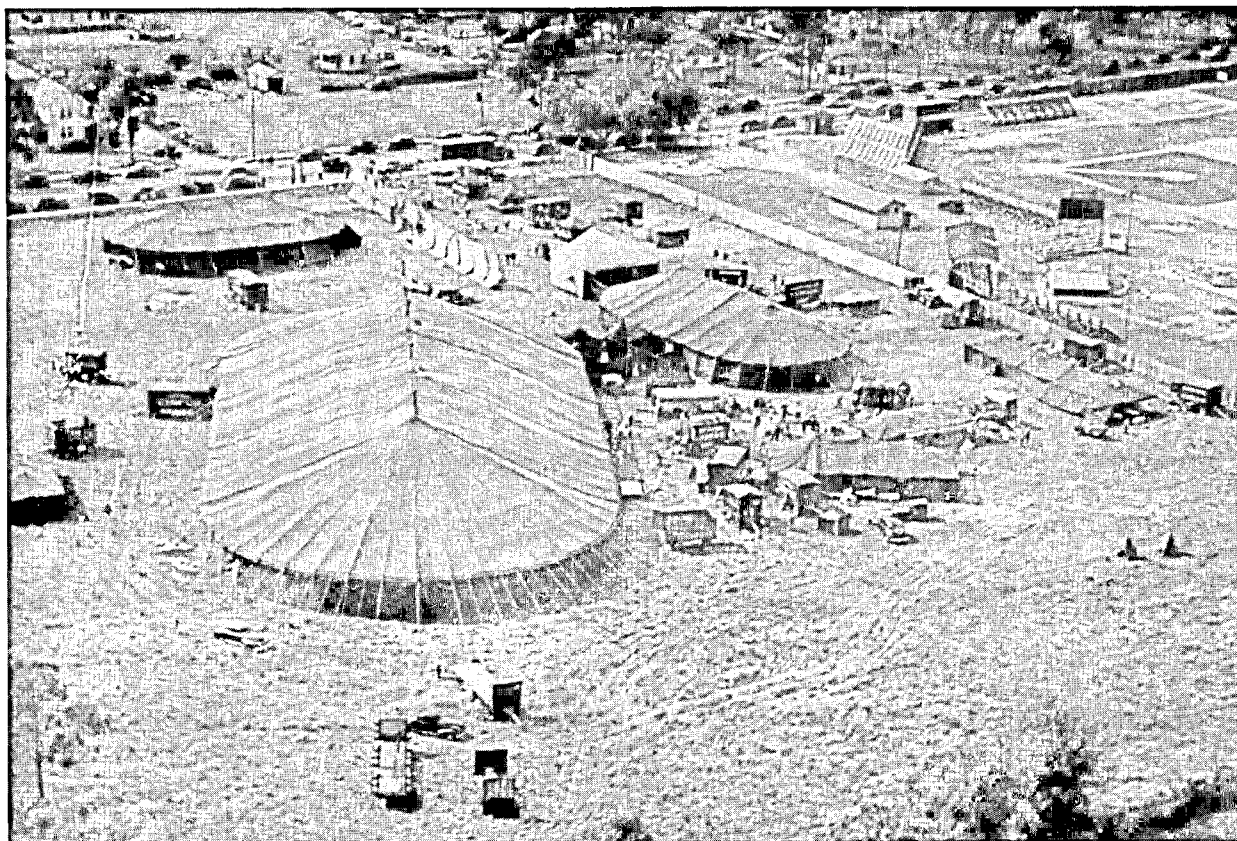
Another important factor in deciding to go on rails was that it would be easier to sell the show as being the old Sparks circus which the public knew and loved so well. In those days the mere mention of a circus being a railroad show immediately created an impression in the public eye that the show would be considerably larger and better than a motorized show.

Winter quarters for the new rail show to be framed was the former army air base adjacent to Highway 41 a short distance from the center of town in Venice, Florida. This was the same location as the current, 1969, quarters for the two Ringling-Barnum units. Edgar secured a lease on three buildings and made arrangements for use of a regular Seaboard siding to park the train.

The nearness to Sarasota, winter







home of the giant Ringling-Barnum show, made an ideal location especially when considerable equipment was to be purchased or leased from the Big Show. Of course the title itself was under lease from the Ringling management. Edgar was very close to Jim Haley, current head of Ringling-Barnum, and his wife, Aubrey, who was the widow of the late Richard T. Ringling (son of Alf T.) and a major stockholder in the firm. Edgar had served on the Ringling board of directors in Haley's place during the latter's prison confinement following the tragic fire at Hartford in 1944. The Haleys were frequent visitors to Venice to check on the progress of the new Sparks rail show.

Denny Helms was named as general superintendent over all of the quarters work while P. A. McGrath was hired to be the trainmaster and given the job of preparing the soon to be acquired rail cars for the road, and Charlie Webb, the new big top boss canvasman, was appointed to ready the canvas, seats, and other physical properties. Both McGrath and Webb were given a number of workingmen to aid in their tasks.

Plans were made that the show would travel on ten cars, all of them back, as the advance would use trucks rather than a railway car. Arnold Maley, who was secretary-treasurer of the show,

Photo No. 1 — Aerial view of Sparks Circus on the lot. Photo believed to have been taken on opening day at Ft. Myers, Fla., March 4, 1947. Note the dark (army green) color of all canvas with exception of the marquee. Circus World Museum Col.

has furnished the following information on the acquisition of the ten cars.

Only one stock car was used and it was obtained on lease from Ringling-Barnum. Six flat cars were acquired.

Photo No. 5 — James Edgar, owner of the 1947 Sparks Circus, on the show's midway during an early season stand. David Reddy Collection

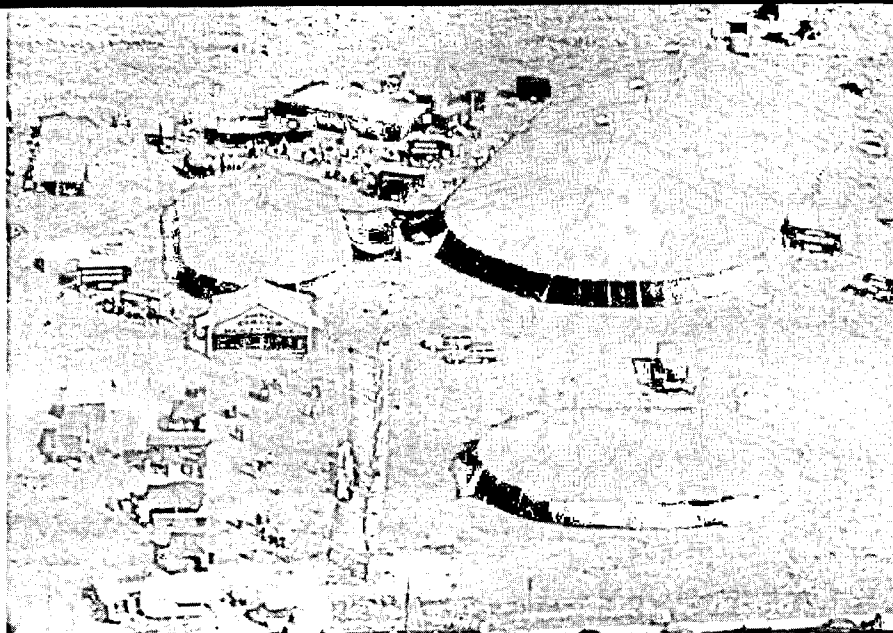


One, a Warren built car, came from Ringling-Barnum on lease. Two, also Warren built, were purchased from Barney Gerety who had formerly operated the large Beckman & Gerety Shows (carnival) and still had some surplus equipment stored at the Shreveport, La. fairgrounds. Three flats were purchased from the Hoffner-Thrall Co. of Chicago. Only two of these were regular Thrall built cars, the third was one the firm had constructed by splicing together two regular system flats.

Three standard coaches were purchased in Washington, D.C. from the Pennsylvania Railroad for \$1500.00 each. They had recently been in passenger service. McGrath put steel plates on the sides of the cars and rebuilt the interiors for circus use. Charlie Webb recalls that one car was fixed up for the staff. Maley, McGrath, and Helms had staterooms, Edgar used one-third of the car for his quarters, and two rows of bunks were built at the end. The other two cars were arranged in typical show fashion to house the performers and workingmen. Observers of the show during the season say the cars were fixed up inside very fine and were kept clean and in the best of condition.

Color scheme for the railway cars was as follows. Flats were painted aluminum-silver and lettered in red. The stock car was red with a large white stripe running full length of the





car with the title below in yellow on a red letterboard. Sleepers were red with title in yellow beneath the windows. Above windows appeared in yellow script lettering the old Sparks slogan, "A Supreme Achievement in Clean Amusement". On opening day the train looked like a million and consisted of 1 stock, 6 flats, and 3 sleepers.

Charlie Webb with several helpers built additional grandstand using the 1946 stuff as a nucleus. Also built were new short side starbacks, stakes, poles, ring curbs, ticket boxes, wiring, etc. Center poles were made from cut down former Ringling-Barnum poles. Details of the new seating appears in the Bill-board review article printed later.

A new spread of canvas was purchased from the U. S. Tent & Awning Co. of Chicago. All except the new marquee, which was white, was a dark army "forest green" color. Although the canvas was new all tents had either been standard war surplus items or at least had been constructed from surplus army green material. The big top was so dark inside lights had to be turned

Photo No. 7 — No. 18, office and ticket wagon, on lot at Tampa, Fla., March 8-9, 1947. Bill Elbirn Collection

Photo No. 2 — Different aerial view of Sparks Circus on the same lot as Photo No. 1. These two photos give a complete view of the entire 1947 show set up on the lot. David Reddy Collection

on even for the matinees. This was no problem, in fact, just prior to World War II both Ringling-Barnum and Cole Bros. had purposefully obtained dark colored big tops as they felt their lighting effects did much to spruce up the performance.

The complete canvas layout for 1947 was as follows: Big top, 120 ft. round with three 40 ft. middles and 12 ft. side-wall; Menagerie, 60 ft. round with three 20 ft. middles; Side show, 60 ft. round with two 20 ft. middles; Horse top, 20 x 40; Marquee 26 x 30; Dressing room, 30 x 60 (push pole type); Cook-house 30 x 60 (push pole type), and concessions 10 x 15. Possibly one or two other minor tops were used.

An order was placed with the Lewis Diesel Engine Co. of Memphis, Tenn. to furnish 20 wagons and 6 cages for the price of \$46,301.88. These were custom built to specifications laid out by the show and were all steel constructed and equipped with pneumatic tires. They were the finest money could

buy. No show in the country could boast of such fine equipment and the circus world had seen nothing like it since the ill fated short-lived Tim McCoy Wild West Show back in 1938. The several small railers of the World War II period such as Austin Bros., Arthur Bros., and Russell Bros., as well as the current Clyde Beatty and Dailey Bros. shows had all made out with a variety of old circus or carnival wagons, former trucks converted to wagons, or in general, a makeshift batch of vehicles, but not so with the new Sparks show. It loaded perfectly in the all new custom built wagons and despite the many pitfalls that lay ahead for the show, loading or moving to and from the lot were never one of them. Exhibit A is a copy of the original list of wagons and payment schedule from the Lewis Diesel Engine Co.

Baggage wagons were painted red with yellow titling edged or shaded in blue. Aluminum-silver paint was used for numbering, undergear, wheel rims, spokes, and wagon tongues. The six small cages were painted aluminum with blue lettering and striping but were not numbered.

The show had a number of motor pieces, a few from the 1946 show, some of which loaded on the train while others travelled overland. Complete list of motor equipment was as follows: 1 Chevrolet war surplus truck with water pump; 1 Chevrolet war surplus truck with winch and water pump; 1 Chevrolet stake body truck; 1 stake body truck; 1 stake driver; 1 Case tractor; 1 jeep, a couple of station wagons, and a new Scoopmobile all purpose lift machine. The latter was a great labor saving device and did a variety of jobs round the lot. Photos indicate the Case tractor, scoopmobile, and two trucks always loaded on the flats. Rest of the motor equipment is believed to have

Photo No. 8 — Sparks circus stock car No. 37 at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. This was the only stock carried that season. Photo by Robert Sams

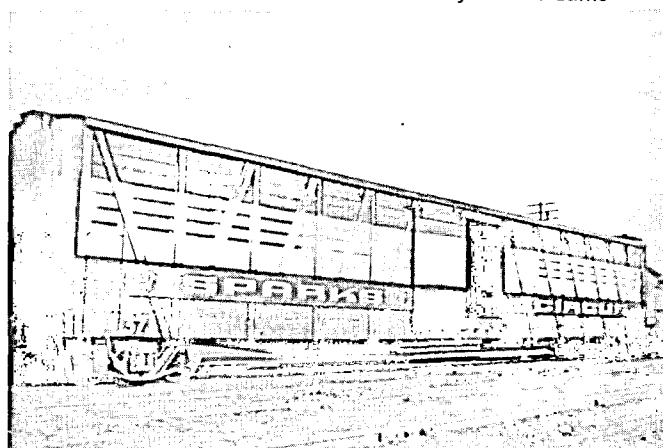
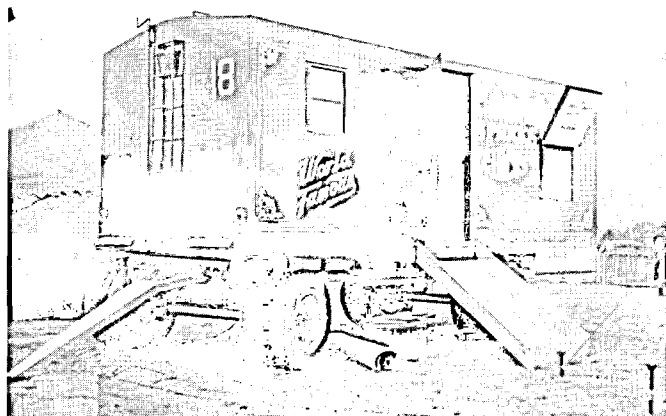






Photo No. 9 — No. 12, stake and chain wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala. April 4-5, 1947. Big top is in background. Photo by Robert Sams

travelled overland at least during the first part of the season.

The train was unloaded in a variety of ways. Photos indicate that most of the time the jeep was used to move wagons over the flats and to the runs but at times elephants were used for this purpose.

A number of privately owned vehicles also went overland. These included a concession semi and grease joint, and a prop and sleeper bus of one of the performing families and possibly others. Later as the show entered Canada other arrangements had to be made to transport all of these vehicles on the train which will be related in the second half of the article.

The advance department was all motorized and used a 1946 Studebaker pickup, a 1946 Ford pickup, a 1947 Ford stake body 1½ ton truck, and a Chevrolet panel truck. As can be seen most of these vehicles were new and in good shape to cover the many miles necessary to bill the show. First paper

Photo No. 11 — No. 22, dog cage wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams

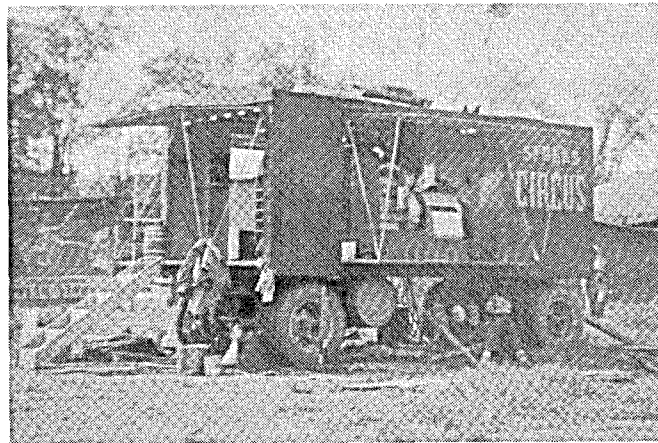
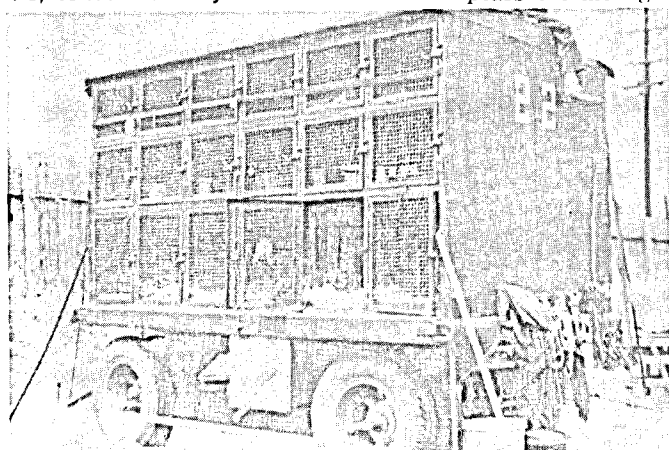


Photo No. 10 — No. 16, light plant wagon, on lot at Ottawa, Ontario, June 6-7, 1947. Photo by J. B. Ashworth

usually went up two weeks in advance of show date. It was mostly old Sparks stock but with a few new special designs. Great play was put on the railroad and original Sparks angle. There was a deliberate attempt to associate the 1947 show with the former Sparks railroad show which had been so successful and popular. In addition to outdoor billing the 1947 show put heavy emphasis on radio spot announcements and published a very fine radio press book. Newspaper advertising was adequate with a variety of new cut designs being used. In most places newspaper ads were run on alternate days and of course with as much regular stock stories and the press boys could land.

Five Indian elephants were carried in 1947. All were leased from Ringling-Barnum. The herd consisted of TOPSY and JESSIE, both on the 1946 Sparks show, and CROSS COUNTRY BABE, EMMA, and VIC, which were added for the 1947 tour. It has been said that Jessie had a bad leg and that Vic would perform but not work on the lot.

No other lead type stock were carried with the exception of a number of horses, ponies, and mules.

Although the new cages were rather small and during the season several observers opined that the show needed strengthening in that department it appears the menagerie was adequate and

in line with a 10 car show but admittedly was nothing in comparison with the old Sparks 20 car show. The Billboard review gives a good listing of the cage animals on opening day. Bob Sams later listed the caged animals when the show played Birmingham as follows:

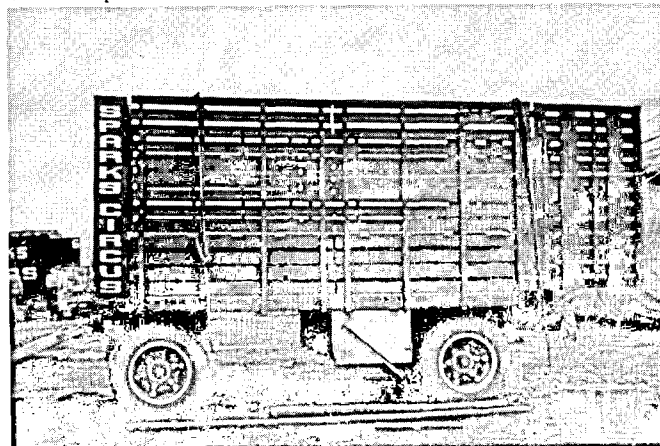
#### Cages

- 1 — 1 lion
- 2 — 1 leopard
- 3 — birds (Pelicans)
- 4 — 1 chimp
- 5 — birds
- 6 — monkeys

The show also exhibited an alligator in the menagerie top. The 6 cages and elephants were housed in the menagerie while a separate horse top was used for the equines. Greyhounds and pigs used in the performance were kept in the very fine new dog cage wagon built for that purpose. Some chimps and other privately owned small animals were carried overland.

Throughout the winter The Billboard kept the show world informed of the

Photo No. 12 — No. 14, starbacks seat wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams





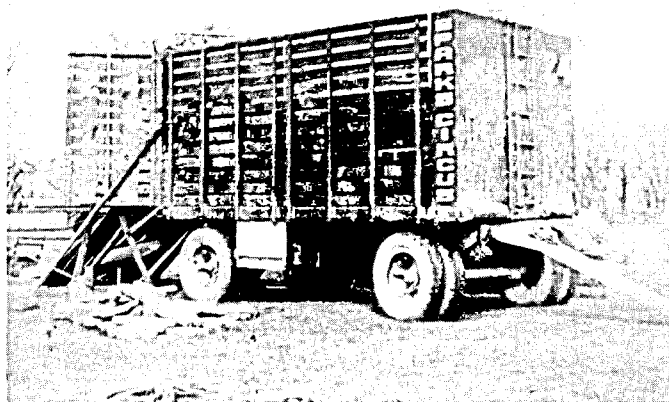


Photo No. 13 — No. 24, end blues seat wagon, on 1947 Sparks lot. Photo by Maurice Allaire

progress of the new show. It was announced around the first of February that the canvas arrived as did the first of the new wagons. John White was in quarters and trained two pony drills, a leaping greyhound act, the latter to be a big feature of the performance, and a group of high school horses. Staffers announced in early February included Henry Kyes, bandmaster; Ernie Burch, producing clown; and Marshall Green, general agent. An auto accident a couple weeks later injured Green so he had to be replaced temporarily by Verne Williams. Pete Kortess was signed to furnish the sideshow attractions with Ray Jones to manage it for him.

Opening date was set for Ft. Myers, Fla. on March 4 which left very little time to get everything set and ready. A preview performance was planned to be given at quarters on Sunday, March 2.

Edgar lined up a good group of experienced circus people for his staff which are listed in detail in the Billboard review. John White, Edgar's

Photo No. 15 — No. 20, side show wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams

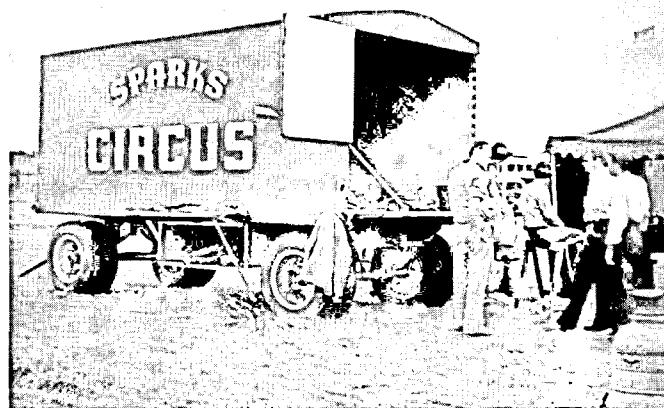
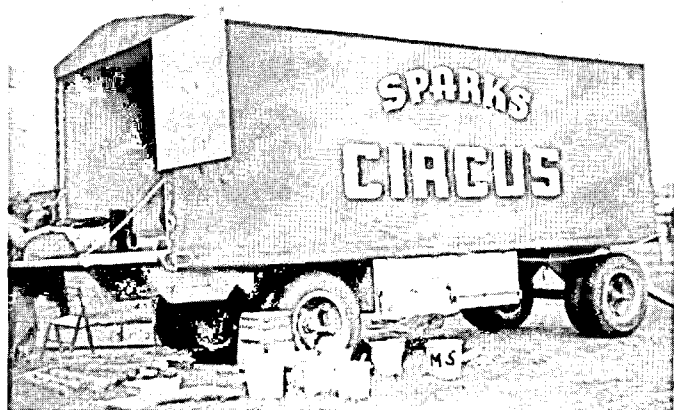


Photo No. 14 — No. 26, concessions wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams

father in law, was named director of personnel and Thomas Cropper was appointed equestrian director. Working with Edgar they succeeded in lining up a very fine performance which was pleasing and adequate for a 10 car show. The wild animal act of Damoo Dhotre which had been a strong part of the 1946 performance was missing as Damoo had moved back to the Big Show and no caged acts at all appeared in the 1947 Sparks program. The official Sparks 1947 performance as listed in it's printed program was as follows:

Gala Introductory Spectacle—CIRCUS FIESTA. A Glittering-Glorious-Scintillating-Pageant of Magnificent Splendor—Presented by an International Galaxy of World Famous Arenic and Circus Stars—of the Fantastic Land of "Make Believe", of Sawdust and Spangles—On the Hippodrome Track. Henry Kyes, Bandmaster; Presented by James Edgar; Thomas Cropper, Equestrian Director; Special Costumes Designed by Diane; Executed by Ann White; John White—Director of Personnel."

DISPLAY NO. 1—Ring 1—Performing Ponies in Intricate Maneuvers presented by Thomas Cropper.

Ring 3—Educated Ponies in a Military Drill, presented by John White.

DISPLAY NO. 2—Ring 1—High Jinks on the High Trapeze, presented by James Troy.

Ring 3—A Novel Presentation. High in mid-air upon the Flying Trapeze, presented by the Great Francisco.

DISPLAY NO. 3—Ring 2—Amazing Accomplished Athletes Presenting Equilibristic Prowess upon the Trampoline Net, The Hodgini Troupe.

DISPLAY NO. 4—Ring 1—Single Elephant Act, "Jessie", presented by Miss Margery Canter.

Ring 2—"Queen Topsy", Single Elephant Act, presented by Miss Dorothy Brown.

Ring 3—Single Elephant Act, "Babe" presented by Miss Sue Staley.

DISPLAY NO. 5—A Bevy of Daring Beauties in an Aerial Display of Grace and Rhythm upon the Spanish Web.

Ring 1—Caudillo Sisters.

Ring 2—"The Daring Young Man" on the Flying Trapeze by Billy Barton.

Ring 3—Caudillo Sisters.

DISPLAY NO. 6—An Amazing Exhibition of Clever Juggling by the Acevedo Troupe, from "South of the Border," in Ring 2.

DISPLAY NO. 7—Ring 1—Principal Riding Act by the "Beau Brummel" on the Sawdust Ring, Tommy Hodgini.

Ring 3—Remarkable Feats of Superb Equestrianism by the talented Joe Hodgini Jr.

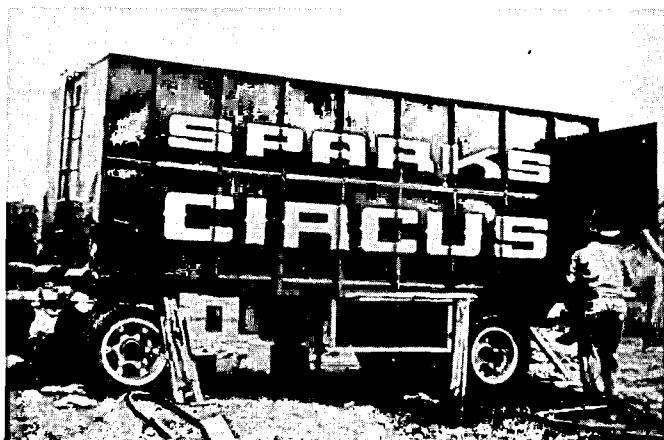
DISPLAY NO. 8—America's Only Troupe of Performing and Leaping Greyhounds, trained and presented by John White, in Ring 2.

DISPLAY NO. 9—Introducing the "Merry Monarchs of Mirth" in a Hurricane of Hilarity—Mad Zanies in a Mirthquake of Laughter.

DISPLAY NO. 10—Ring 1—A Porcine Circus, presented by John White.

Ring 2—Direct from the Hollywood Movie Studios, in a Personal Appearance, "Tarzan of the Apes". Simian Hero of a Hundred Screen Trimuphs, presented by Captain Mackey.

Photo No. 16 — No. 28, menagerie wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams





Ring 3—A Troupe of Educated Angora Goats, presented by Miss Viola Jackson.

Introduction of our Wild West Contingent. Trick Riders, Fancy Ropers, "Bronc" Busters and Introducing, Stanley Gerber, Famous Frontier Rodeo and Motion Picture Star and His Rough Riders of the World.

DISPLAY NO. 11—Marvelous Feats of Agility upon the Silver Strands.

Ring 1—James Troy.

Ring 2—Demonstrating Precision and Skill, Caudillo Sisters, from Sunny Mexico—their American Debut.

Ring 3—Alex Acevedo.

DISPLAY NO. 12—Again—The Sons of Fun—and Jolly Jesters—Return to Present their Crazy Antics, this Time with an Old Ever New Stunt. Introducing Ernie Burch, Producing Clown, and Elmer (Me Too) Lindquist, Hambone Jackson, Alva Evans, Bill Nippo, Percy Smith, Harold Smith, Scotty Davis, Frank Cromwell, Johnny Bosler.

DISPLAY NO. 13—Ring 1—High in Midair Performing in a Hazardous "Neck Loop", Miss Ah San Lou.

Ring 3—A Daring Exhibition of Iron Jaw, by Miss Mabel McGrath.

DISPLAY NO. 14—Ring 2—Mexico's Most Outstanding Girl Acrobats, in their First American Appearance, The Four Caudillo Sisters.

DISPLAY NO. 15—Ring 1—"Ebenzezar" the Unridable Mule.

Ring 3—"Dynamite", Comedy Mule.

DISPLAY NO. 16—Ring 1—High Aloft on the Swinging Ladders in an Aerial Ballet, The Acevedo Sisters, and Sue Staley.

Ring 2—A Death Defying Daring "Cloud Swing" of Grace and Charm, presented by "De Baronet", The Adonis of the White Tops.

Ring 3—High Aloft on the Swinging Ladders in an Aerial Ballet, Dorothy Lee Brown, Helen Troy, Margery Canter.

DISPLAY NO. 17—Ring 2—America's Premier Bareback Riding Troupe in Graceful Feats of Equestrianism, Joe Hodgini Troupe, featuring Joe Hodgini Sr., World's Greatest Riding Clown.

DISPLAY NO. 18—The Merry Andrews Joys and Royal Jester Again Take Over in Non-sensical Stunts.

DISPLAY NO. 19—Ring 1—Menage Number by Sue Staley.

Ring 2—Blue Ribbon Winners on Parade, introducing a novelty by Viola Jackson.

Ring 3—Menage Number by Roxane Cropper.

DISPLAY NO. 20—Second Concert Announcement.

DISPLAY NO. 21—Ring 2—Kings and Queens of the Slender Silver Strand, The Acevedo Troupe.

DISPLAY NO. 22—Clown number—Walk-around.

DISPLAY NO. 23—Ring 2—High Double Trapeze Act by Francisco Reynosa and Ramona Reynosa, from Uruguay, South America.

DISPLAY NO. 24—Sparks Circus World Famous Herd of Performing Ponderous Pachyderms, tons of talent, in a remarkable demonstration of Brute Sagacity. Presented by Dorothy Lee Brown, Trained by Captain Gene Haven. In Ring 2.

#### GRAND FINALE.

Before and After the Big Show visit The Circus Side Show. Presented by Pete Kortess. Living Freaks and Curiosities From All Parts of the World."

The 1947 circus season was now at hand and a number of shows would be opening very early in the Spring, Sparks being one. Five railroad circuses were ready to roll, one more than the previous season. They included Ringling-Barnum on 106 cars (all time high for that show); Cole Bros. on 30 cars; Dailey Bros. on 20 cars; Clyde Beatty on 15 cars; and Sparks on 10 cars. Major motorized circuses included King Bros., Mills Bros., Al G. Kelly-

Miller Bros., Bailey Bros., James M. Cole, C. R. Montgomery, Roger Bros., Stevens Bros., Hunt Bros., and Yankee Patterson. In addition to these there were still a number of smaller truck shows making a total of about 25 circuses large and small on the road in 1947. The previous season which had been the first made in peacetime following the lush World War II years had been good for most shows despite shortages of both labor and equipment and much economic instability including labor unrest and widespread strikes. Money was still plentiful and the returning GIs who had not yet blown their bonus checks were still amusement hungry and circuses expected another good season in 1947. Competition would be heavy for many shows and Sparks would later have its share but for the first few weeks of the route in Florida the show would pretty well have the state to itself.

The opening Venice benefit preview performance scheduled for Sunday, March 2, had to be cancelled because of rain and the bad condition of the lot. Dorothy Lee Brown, the show's Bilboard columnist, wrote that "Only Noah could have shown on that lot". The show loaded and moved to Ft. Myers, Florida where the 1947 season officially began on Tuesday, March 4, with many visiting dignitaries from Ringling-Barnum on hand, including George Smith, Ed Kelly, Fred Bradna, Pat Valdo, Jim and Aubrey Haley, and Mabel Ringling.

The 1947 Sparks Circus opening was reported by the following review which appeared in the March 15, 1947 Billboard:

"SPARKS OPENING PLEASING"

"Org Shines In Snappy Dress"

"Adequate program presents new features—equipment new from stem to stern".

By Pat Purcell.

"FORT MYERS, Fla.—March 8—Sparks Circus, a grand old name in Eastern and Southern territory leased from the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus a year ago by James Edgar, auspiciously made its season debut and the second of its revival here Tuesday (4).

"A bright sun made the brand-new railroad show sparkle; matinee was well filled with kids spilling over onto the track; program was adequate with several new features; all departments were well stocked with workingmen, and there was a feeling of esprit de corps about the entire layout.

#### All New Thruout

"Edgar has built a new circus from the ground up. His train includes six flats, three coaches and a stock car, and railroad officials pronounced the rolling stock as "great" without solicitation. All wagons are of steel construction, built to specifications, and it loads as snug as a bug in a rug. In addition to his stake driver, Edgar has two trucks, holdover from his truck show last year, that double as stake pullers, and he has a new mechanical piece known as a scoopmobile that also pulls stakes and is effective in loading poles and seat planks.

"All canvas is new, fireproofed green with red trim, with the exception of the marquee, which is white.

"Big top is a 120 with three 40s. The menagerie is a 60 with three 20s, while the Side Show has a 60 with two 20s. This combined with the cookhouse, horse top, dressing top, band

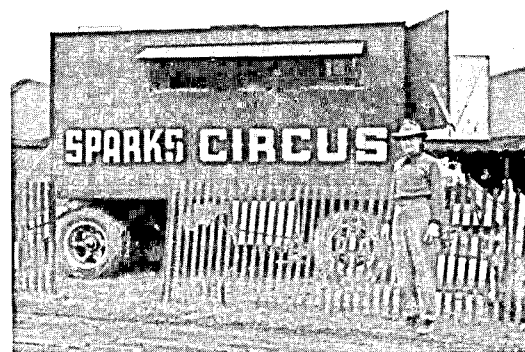


Photo No. 18—John Staley, steward, with No. 44, cookhouse wagon, and dining tent in background on lot at Windsor, Ontario, May 5, 1947. Bill Elbirn Collection

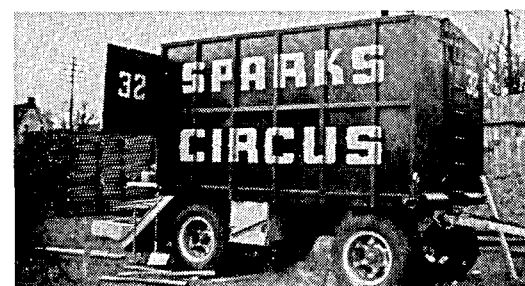


Photo No. 17—No. 32, cookhouse wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams

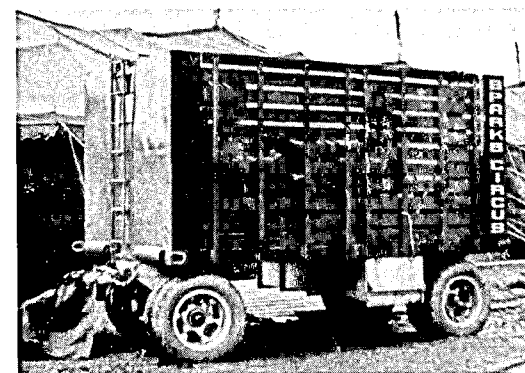


Photo No. 19—No. 34, jack wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams

top and other incidental pieces gives the org plenty of sight appeal on the lot.

A new 150-foot banner line for the Side Show, owned by Pete Kortess and managed by Roy B. Jones, combined with Bush-Laube's custard, juice, grab, novelty and popcorn stands makes an inviting midway.

#### Aluminum Cage Wagons

"Six small cage wagons, built of sheet aluminum and steel, bulkwark the menagerie, which includes five elephants, leased from R-B, a lion, leopard, black panther, two chimps, two alligators, a cage of monkeys, two pelicans, a pair of raccoons and the show's lead stock arrayed around a candy and a novelty stand.

"Menagerie cage wagons are built to load two abreast or as crosswagons and are enhanced by four-foot panels which serve as masking





Photo No. 20 — No. 38, stable wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams

when not used to close in the cages for travel. Cage wagons are too low for hauling over lot humps and may cause trouble on muddy lots, and Edgar plans to remedy this soon by the use of larger wheels.

#### Has More Capacity

"Big top capacity has been increased by use of 11 high chairs for the grandstand and 11 high starbacks for the back grandstand. Blues are 15 high, pitched a trifle low. Big top has four exits, each outlined with white canvas and well marked, in addition to the back door and the connection entrance.

"Two wagons are utilized for the cookhouse, which is modern in the cooking department. One wagon is equipped with a regulation hotel range which burns bottled gas, and has a refrigerator with a capacity for 500 pounds of ice.

"Program caught the opening matinee running smoothly despite only one dress rehearsal. The preview performance scheduled for Venice, Fla., the winter-quarters town, last Sunday was cancelled because of rain, and Monday was utilized in making a leisurely move to Fort Myers to acquaint new hands with their duties. The program ran one hour and 55 minutes despite two cuts, and it can be tightened up another 15 minutes with ease when the prop boys handle their chores with more alacrity.

#### Domestic Animals Score

"New features on the program which packed the most appeal were two acts framed and presented by John White, Edgar's father-in-law. They were a troupe of leaping greyhounds and a troupe of trained pigs. The greyhounds produced real thrills with their amazing leaps, and the porcine pageant gave the oldsters many a chuckle and drew screams of delight from the youngsters.

"Entire show was well costumed, with a

Photo No. 22 — No. 64, steel and prop wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams



Photo No. 21 — No. 54, wardrobe wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams

"Joe Hodgini's family was strong enough in their bareback feature, and the clowns took over again. Hodgine featured his two sons, Joe Jr. and Tommy, but the old gent proved he still can hop on and off a horse.

"Tex Marshall and Tommy Cropper worked menage horses in the end rings while White presented a novel feature in the center with Viola Jackson on a menage horse, two ponies that posed and made excellent jumps and climaxed it with two greyhounds leaping over Miss Jackson while the latter was seated on her horse.

"After the second concert announcement the Acevedos, a man and three girls, did their feature wire number, and the clowns walked around while the props were being struck. Francisco and Ramona Reynosa, an unusually personable couple, presented an iron-jaw novelty that was solid, and the program closed with Gene Haven the elephants, four doing the ring routine, a track lay-down, and a fifth being added for the track long mount.

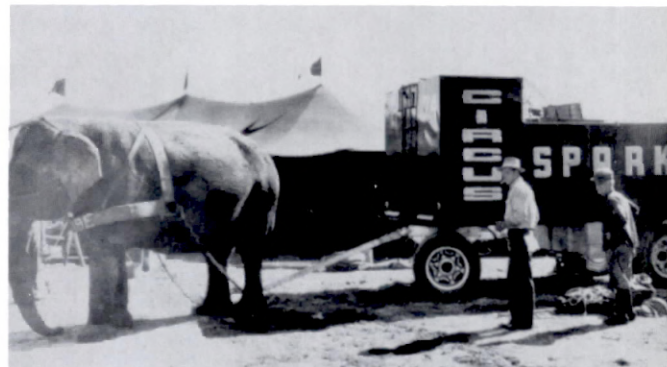
"Cropper, as equestrian director, kept the program running smoothly and announcements were well handled by Dave Murphy. Henry Kyes and five with a calliope cut it in true circus fashion.

#### Burch Heads Clowns

"Clown alley, headed by Ernie Burch, listed Elmer (Mee Too) Lindquist, Hambone Jackson, Alva Evans, Bill Nippo, Percy and Harold Smith, Scotty Davis, Frank Cromwell and Johnny Bosler.

Staff includes: James Edgar, general manager; Marshall L. Green, general agent; Verne A. Williams, traffic manager; Arnold Maley, secretary-treasurer; Dennie Helms, general superintendent; Walter D. Nealand, Charles Underwood and Dan Pyne, press and radio; Benny

Photo No. 23 — Elephant hitched to No. 74, bandstand wagon, on 1947 Sparks Circus lot. David Reddy Collection



credit going to Diane, but it was executed by Mrs. James (Ann) Edgar, and to her goes the hefty nod. The tournament, which filled the entire track, was well framed and put the spectators in a happy frame of mind despite a 20-minute delay in starting caused by the unexpected rush of customers.

"Pony drills in the end rings worked by John White and Thomas Cropper flanked a menage horse worked with reins by Tex Marshall. James Troy entertained with clowning on a high trapeze which the Great Francisco balanced on a high trap.

"The Hodgini Troupe followed with its trampoline, and single elephant acts were presented in the end rings by Margery Canter and Sue Staley. Dorothy Lee Brown was scheduled for the center ring, but she was absent due to the death of her aunt in Wisconsin.

"White then presented his leaping greyhounds, which gave those who came to gasp something to gasp about, followed by a clown stop.

#### Acevedo Troupe Okay

"Caudillo Sisters and Billy Barton on webs and flying trap was cut and Tommy and Joe Hodgine Jr. followed with the principal riding acts. Acevedo Troupe's juggling novelty amply served as a featured attraction, and then the clowns stopped it.

"White's porkers featured the next display, flanked by Captain Mackey's educated chimp and a troupe of angora goats worked by Viola Jackson. White also trained this act.

"The first concert announcement, introducing Stanley Gerber, split the performance amidships, and the slack was then taken up by Jimmy Troy and Alex Acevedo on slack wires. Caudillo Sisters' wire act, as listed on the printed program, was eliminated, their rigging still being in winter quarters.

"Mabel McGrath did an iron-jaw solo, followed by Billy Pape and Renee, high perch. The Four Caudillo Sisters offered their strong acro routine, but the "unridable mules" were left in the stock top. Revolving swinging ladders, with three girls in each set, were worked over the end rings, de Baronet's cloud swing having been eliminated.

#### Hodginis Fill Bill



Fowler, contracting agent; Henry Kyes, bandmaster, Ernie Burch, producing clown; Mrs. Louise Nath, office secretary; Raymond Sheetz, front door; Harry Brown, tax box; Howard Ahrhardt, national advertising; Bush-Laube concessions, with Thomas F. Kennedy, manager; John White, director personnel; Thomas Cropper, equestrian director; P. A. McGrath, master of transportation; Charles Webb, supt. of canvas; Ward Nath, chief electrician; Harry Hammond, supt. of tickets; Howard Mentz, boss props; Gene Haven, menagerie supt.; John Staley, chief steward; Thomas Bryden, manager of advertising car; Mrs. Lillian Compton, wardrobe mistress.

"Summing it up, it was a flock of circus to be crammed into a 10 car show, and is framed to have a great chance if the elements give it an even break on its lengthy tour."

Exhibit B printed here is a copy from the original document giving the route of the show from opening date thru May 4, final day played in the States before entering Canada. (Remainder of route will appear in Part II). This document also gives the railroad mileage and cost and informs the reader the expense of moving a 10 car show in those days. In addition to the rail charges the show had a substantial daily nut to make and it was essential it draw well in order to keep a healthy financial condition. Nut for the opening weeks was about \$4500.00 daily but this was soon lowered to around 3800.00.

Following the Ft. Myers opening the show had scheduled another 23 stands in Florida and would not begin working it's way northward until the end of March. It became a practice to play two day stands in the larger cities and the first of these came over the first weekend at Tampa. Most stands were medium sized towns from ten to forty thousand in population but occasionally Sparks got into smaller places of five thousand or under.

The March 22 Billboard summed up activities for the first couple weeks stating moves were being made on time, all departments had plenty of help, but that in general the Florida stands were not paying off. St. Petersburg was real good with two matinees and a night show scheduled but the four performances given in Tampa did not draw

Photo No. 24 — No. 120, chair wagon, on lot at Birmingham, Ala., April 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams



Photo No. 6 — Executives of the 1947 Sparks Circus inside the big top at an early season stand. Left to right are Arnold Maley, treasurer; Marshall Green, general agent; James Edgar, owner; and Paul Conway, general counsel. David Reddy Collection

enough customers to make one good house. Edgar said that the matinee at Clearwater was alright but cold weather hurt night business. He said he had just as soon forget about Bartow and Winter Haven. At the latter Billy Barton was hurt when his cloud swing rigging broke during the evening performance and he had to be out of the show for several days. One happy item was that the big top crew which had started with about 18 men short filled all vacancies while the show was at Tampa.

Sparks drew half houses at Orlando on March 15 but the next day at Deland it was somewhat better but the big top was still not full. The Johnny J. Jones Exposition (Carnival) was wintering at the fairgrounds in Deland (current 1969 winter home of the Beatty-Cole Circus) and there was plenty of visiting between personnel of the two shows. Daytona Beach on March 18 came thru with a big one, full houses at both performances, and was the first time in a week that the big top had been packed. The good busi-

ness did not last long and the next stand at St. Augustine was a complete blank. Heavy rains and a muddy lot made it necessary to blow the stand. The city fathers drew a blast from show officials when they would not permit the use of any straw on the lot which would have enabled the show to set up. The cookhouse did go up and remained up until after the evening meal, after which it was loaded and the show departed for Palatka. Another muddy and soggy lot kept business away there.

Ray Jones, manager of Pete Kortess' sideshow, left at Lake City on March 25 and Kortess' daughter, Rita, took over the management.

The final stand in Florida came at Pensacola on March 28 and it was the best of the state with three shows being given. There were two capacity matinees and a turnaway at night. Arnold Maley was quoted as saying it was the biggest single day since the show first took to the road in 1946. But despite the good business on the final day, Edgar told The Billboard he was happy to get out of Florida as the almost full month in the state had been rough and had given a real test of nerves.

Leaving Florida the show moved to

Photo No. 25—No. 36, platform wagon, and No. 54, wardrobe wagon, on lot at a 1947 Sparks Circus stand in Ohio. Elbirt Collection





Mobile, Ala. for a two day stand March 29-30. The train arrived at 8 a.m. but despite a two and a half mile haul everything was up and ready when doors opened at 1:30 P.M. The show's hauling trucks were in good shape and the easy rolling wagons were no problem to get from the runs to lot very rapidly. The first day matinee saw the tent not even half filled and overall business at Mobile was only fair. Everything else but business was going smoothly now. The performance had been tightened and was running with mid-season precision. The final day of March saw the show at Laurel, Miss.

When treasurer Arnold Maley completed his statement covering the show's operation from March 4 thru March 31 inclusive the results did not look good.

Total Receipts	\$114,106.89
Total Disbursements	\$124,439.47

Total cash loss	\$ 10,332.58
-----------------	--------------



Photo No. 28 — Truck No. 238 on lot at Birmingham, Ala., May 4-5, 1947. Photo by Robert Sams

The early weeks had been disappointing but it was felt that cold and wet weather had been the main cause for the low take and consequent loss. Steps were taken to cut the daily nut by several hundred dollars. There was no cause for real alarm and it was felt by the management and it's financial backers that things would improve considerably in the coming weeks. Sparks wasn't the only show taking a beating in the early weeks. Clyde Beatty was having it very rough on his trip across Texas, New Mexico, and Arizona enroute to California where hopefully business would be better.

As is always the case, by the end of March the trade publications were speculating on the routes the major circuses would take in 1947. The March 29 Billboard opined that Sparks, Bailey Bros., Ringling-Barnum, and Clyde Beatty were all headed for Canada. Beatty had had an extremely profitable tour of the Dominion in 1946 and the natives were still circus hungry after a wartime drought of six years. Sparks was definitely planning an extensive tour of Canada but the other shows

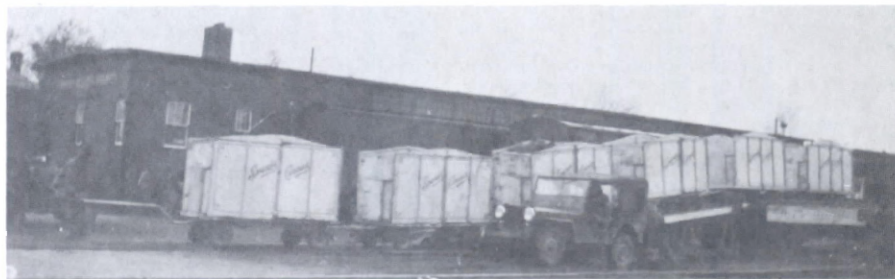


Photo No. 30 — Sparks six cages coming down the runs at Guelph, Ontario, May 21, 1947. Photo by Jack Lyon

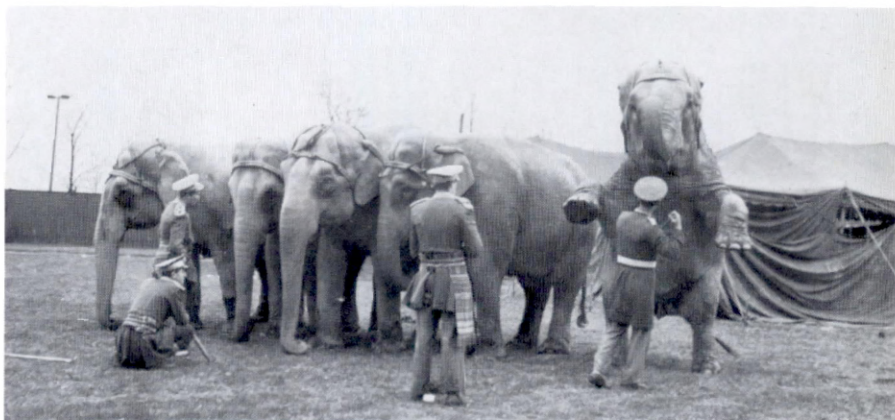
either never planned the trip in the first place or later cancelled out as Sparks was the only major show to visit in 1947.

On the first day of April Sparks was at Meridian, Miss. and the rains came, so heavy was the downpour that the show's correspondent wrote that the arena looked like a swimming pool. The night show was cancelled after a threat of high winds.

The show day and dated the Lee Shows (Carnival) at Tuscaloosa, Ala. on April 3 and Dailey Bros. Circus put up "wait" paper for their scheduled date on April 30th.

Another two day stand came at Birmingham, Ala. April 4-5 and the lot was set up right in the middle of the Henries Bros. Railroad Shows (Carnival) winterquarters so there were plenty of jackpots cut up between the two shows. During the two day stands it was customary to play under auspices as was the case in Birmingham. Bob Sams after observing the show at the Birmingham stand wrote in The Showman that Sparks was first class in every respect and was a miniature version of the Big Show. Also that Edgar had adopted many of the Ringling policies and intended for his show to grow along

Photo No. 31 — Sparks elephant herd on lot at Windsor, Ontario, May 5, 1947. Bulls were Topsy, Jessie, Cross Country Babe, Emma, and Vic. Elbirn Collection



those lines. Unfortunately heavy rains again cut greatly into the take.

The show then moved up through northern Alabama and into Tennessee where it played two day stands at Nashville, Chattanooga, and Knoxville. The first Kentucky stand came at Corbin on April 21 where business was only fair. Lexington the next day had a small matinee but fair house at night in cloudy and cool weather, although generally the weather for the Kentucky dates had been good. Covington on April 23 was the best of the Kentucky stands. The matinee didn't start until almost four but the tent was packed, mainly with kids who were crowded up to the ring curbs. Big top was also full in the evening. A strong UPC sale and good school ticket distribution had brought out the business which was indeed welcomed by the show.

The following day at Hamilton, Ohio was cold and rainy and despite another strong school kid promotion with 35¢ matinee tickets business was lacking. Bailey Bros. had already played Hamilton and did far greater business than Sparks. Due to heavy rains and a muddy lot the show blew Springfield, Ohio on April 25 and moved on to Columbus.

Closest opposition of the year so far came at Columbus, Ohio on April 26-27 when the show day and dated Mills Bros. The following day at Newark Sparks was only one day ahead of Mills and again at Mansfield on April 29 the show was a day ahead of Mills with Cole Bros. Scheduled to play the city on May 28.

The show's operating statement for



Exhibit A — List of wagons purchased from Lewis Diesel Engine Co., Memphis, Tenn. Original document is from Arnold Maley and in collection of CHS Bob Brisendine.

# FLORIDA CIRCUS CORPORATION d/b/a SPARKS CIRCUS

## SCHEDULE "A"

No.	Units Length	Type	Serial No.	Show No.	License No.
1	18'	Steel frame and body Side Show Wagon	2006	No. 20	SC-1
1	22'	Steel frame and body Chair Wagon	2007	No. 120	SC-2
1	16'	Steel frame and body Power Wagon, including 2 — 45KW Diesel Electric 3 Phase generators, composed of 2 General Motors Diesel engines, Ser. Nos. 37122448 and 37122449, and Clark Electric Generator No. 46M02 and 46M03 with complete Control Panels and 350 gal. fuel tank	2021	No. 16	SC-3
1	14'	Steel frame and body Stable Wagon	2010	No. 38	SC-4
1	18'	Steel frame and body Concession Wagon	2004	No. 26	SC-5
1	12'	Steel frame and body Stake and Chain Wagon	2003	No. 12	SC-6
1	32'	Steel frame and body Pole Wagon	2002	No. 132	SC-7
1	12'	Steel frame and body Dog Cage Wagon	2005	No. 22	SC-8
1	18'	Steel frame and body Office Wagon	2024	No. 18	SC-9
1	20'	Steel frame and body Wardrobe Wagon	2023	No. 54	SC-10
1	14'	Steel frame and body Star Back Wagon	2012	No. 14	SC-11
1	14'	Steel frame and body End Blue Wagon	2008	No. 24	SC-12
1	8'	Steel frame and body Cross Cage Wagon	2014		SC-21
1	8'	Steel frame and body Cross Cage Wagon	2015		SC-22
1	8'	Steel frame and body Cross Cage Wagon	2016		SC-23
1	8'	Steel frame and body Cross Cage Wagon	2017		SC-24
1	8'	Steel frame and body Cross Cage Wagon	2018		SC-25
1	8'	Steel frame and body Cross Cage Wagon	2019		SC-26
1	18'	Steel frame and body Menagerie Wagon	2011	No. 28	SC-13
1	14'	Steel frame and body Jack Wagon	2020	No. 34	SC-14
1	16'	Steel frame and body Platform Wagon	2009	No. 36	SC-15
1	14'	Steel frame and body Band Wagon	2027	No. 74	SC-16
1	12'	Steel frame and body Cook House Wagon	2025	No. 44	SC-17
1	23'	Steel frame and body Stringer Wagon	2013	No. 128	SC-18
1	14'	Steel frame and body Cook House Wagon	2026	No. 32	SC-19
1	14'	Steel frame and body Steel and Prop Wagon	2022	No. 64	SC-20

## PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Lewis-Diesel Engine Company — Forty Six Thousand and Three Hundred One and 88/100 dollars. (\$46,301.88)

- 9 Equal successive monthly payments of \$1714.88 each starting April 1, 1947 and the same day of each month thereafter with the ninth payment on December 1, 1947.
- 9 Additional equal successive monthly payments of \$1714.88 each starting April 1, 1948 and the same day of each month thereafter with the eighteenth payment on December 1, 1948.
- 8 Additional equal successive monthly payments of \$1714.88 each starting on April 1, 1949 and the same day of each month thereafter and a 27th and final payment of \$1715.00

Exhibit B. Document from Arnold Maley showing Sparks Circus route from March 4 - May 4, 1947 giving day, date, city, state, population (in thousands), railroad in, railroad out, miles, and cost. Copy of original is in collection of Bob Brisendine.

## Sparks Circus Route March 4 through May 4, 1947

Day — Date — City — State	Pop.	RR In	RR Out	Mis.	Cost
Tue., Mar. 4, Ft. Myers, Fla.	11	SAL	SAL		
Wed., Mar. 5, Arcadia, Fla.	4	SAL	ACL	42	\$408.00
Thur., Mar. 6, Sarasota, Fla.	11	ACL	ACL	54	464.00
Fri., Mar. 7, Bradenton, Fla.	11	ACL	ACL	11	408.00
Sat., Mar. 8, Tampa, Fla.	121	ACL	ACL	43	408.00
Sun., Mar. 9, Tampa, Fla.					
Mon., Mar. 10, St. Petersburg, Fla.	108	ACL	SAL	55	464.00
Tue., Mar. 11, Clearwater, Fla.	9	SAL	SAL	32	408.00
Wed., Mar. 12, Bartow, Fla.	8	SAL	ACL	77	568.00
Thur., Mar. 13, Winter Haven, Fla.	10	ACL	ACL	15	408.00
Fri., Mar. 14, Lakeland, Fla.	22	ACL	ACL	17	408.00
Sat. Mar. 15, Orlando, Fla.	57	ACL	ACL	61	520.00
Sun., Mar. 16		Sunday	Sunday		
Mon., Mar. 17, Deland, Fla.	7	ACL	ACL-FEC	39	408.00
Tue., Mar. 18, Daytona Beach, Fla.	23	ACL	FEC	10	204.00
		FEC		54	464.00
Wed., Mar. 19, St. Augustine, Fla.	12	FEC	FEC	73	568.00
Thur., Mar. 20, Palatka, Fla.	9	FEC	ACL	28	408.00
Fri., Mar. 21, Sanford, Fla.	10	ACL	ACL	75	568.00
Sat., Mar. 22, Ocala, Fla.	10	ACL	ACL	83	605.00
Sun., Mar. 23		Sunday	Sunday		

Mon., Mar. 24, Gainesville, Fla.	14	ACL	ACL	42	408.00
Tue., Mar. 25, Lake City, Fla.	7	ACL	SAL	52	464.00
Wed., Mar. 26, Tallahassee, Fla.	16	SAL	SAL-L&N	106	729.00
Thur., Mar. 27, Chipley, Fla.	5	SAL		43	408.00
Fri., Mar. 28, Pensacola, Fla.	37	L&N	L&N	44	408.00
Sat., Mar. 29, Mobile, Ala.	90	L&N	L&N	117	729.00
Sun., Mar. 30, Mobile, Ala.		L&N	GM&O	106	729.00

(Following note given after this stand. All costs shown are subject to 3% Federal Tax after deduction for show scrip. Show scrip is subject to 15% Fed. Tax. ACL scrip will be issued on moves shown above in amount of 570.00 worth. This scrip will be made available at Tampa, Fla. on March 8 by Mr. Huchey, Div. Passenger Agt. and will have to be paid for in cash. The 570.00 will be deducted in equal amounts of 190.00 from moves from Deland, from Palatka, and from Sanford.)

Mon., Mar. 31, Laurel, Miss.	35	GM&O	Sou	116	729.00
Tue., Apr. 1, Meridan, Miss.	42	Sou	GM&O	58	464.00
Wed., Apr. 2, Columbus, Miss.	18	GM&O	GM&O	98	800.00
Thur., Apr. 3, Tuscaloosa, Ala.	35	GM&O	Sou	60	464.00
Fri., Apr. 4, Birmingham, Ala.	310	Sou	L&N	56	464.00
Sat., Apr. 5, Birmingham, Ala.					
Sun., Apr. 6		Sunday	Sunday		
Mon., Apr. 7, Cullman, Ala.	7	L&N	L&N	52	464.00
Tue., Apr. 8, Decatur, Ala.	30	L&N	Sou	33	408.00
Wed., Apr. 9, Florence, Ala.	22	Sou	L&N	49	408.00
Thur., Apr. 10, Columbia, Tenn.	14	L&N	L&N	79	568.00
Fri., Apr. 11, Nashville, Tenn.	175	L&N	NC&STL	46	408.00
Sat., Apr. 12, Nashville, Tenn.					
Sun., Apr. 13		Sunday	Sunday		
Mon., Apr. 14, Chattanooga, Tenn.	128	NC&STL		152	861.00
Tue., Apr. 15, Chattanooga, Tenn.		Sou	Sou switch	100.00	
Wed., Apr. 16, Cleveland, Tenn.	12	Sou	Sou	30	408.00
Thur., Apr. 17, Athens, Tenn.	10	Sou	Sou	27	408.00
Fri., Apr. 18, Knoxville, Tenn.	175	Sou	L&N	56	464.00
Sat., Apr. 19, Knoxville, Tenn.					
Sun., Apr. 20		Sunday	Sunday		
Mon., Apr. 21, Corbin, Ky.	10	L&N	L&N	106	729.00
Tue., Apr. 22, Lexington, Ky.	60	L&N	L&N	108	729.00
Wed., Apr. 23, Covington, Ky.	80	L&N	L&N-PRR	97	634.00
Thur., Apr. 24, Hamilton, Ohio	60	L&N			204.00
		PRR	PRR	33	330.00
Fri., Apr. 25, Springfield, Ohio	100	PRR	PRR	62	376.00
Sat., Apr. 26, Columbus, Ohio	344	PRR	B&O	35	330.00
Sun., Apr. 27, Columbus, Ohio					
Mon., Apr. 28, Newark, Ohio	40	B&O	B&O	34	330.00
Tue., Apr. 29, Mansfield, Ohio	60	B&O	Erie	71	422.00
Wed., Apr. 30, Marion, Ohio	35	Erie	Erie	39	330.00
Thur., May 1, Lima, Ohio	60	Erie	NKP	60	355.00
Fri., May 2, Findlay, Ohio	25	NKP	NYC	52	355.00
Sat., May 3, Toledo, Ohio	285	NYC	NYC	43	
Sun., May 4, Toledo, Ohio					

(The following note was given after this stand. New York Central contracts have not been received here as hence cost of Findlay to Toledo move isn't listed. Instructions for picking up scrip is included with contracts. In each instance it is where first move over each road is paid.)

Photo No. 32 — Sparks flat car No. 21, built by Warren Tank Car Co., loaded left to right with No. 64, steel and props; No. 74, bandstand; No. 128, stringers, and No. 41, starbacks, in rail yards at a rainy stand in Ohio. Elbirn Collection







the period of April 1 thru April 28 inclusive showed that conditions were even worse than the first.

Total receipts	\$ 97,086.04
Total disbursements	108,083.57

Total Cash Loss \$ 10,997.53

Sparks had now been out less than two months but had lost over 21 G's. Many were speculating as to why the show was not drawing. All observers, showmen and fans alike, were high in praise of the equipment, management, performance, and general appearance and operating efficiency. Weather had been bad in many spots but this was expected at this time of year. Some did feel the show was getting into many towns a little early and was perhaps playing too far off the old Sparks route, however the latter was no real factor as the old Sparks show had made all of this territory many times in the past but of course in former years most of the southern stands had been played in the fall rather than in the spring.

Two days at Toledo on May 3-4 wound up the Ohio tour as well as all stands scheduled in the States prior to beginning a lengthy tour of Canada. Sleeper No. 86 on lease from Ringling-Barnum arrived at Toledo to be used by the show during the Canadian tour. This was an executive type car and had often been used by Mrs. Haley in the past. It was painted and lettered with

Photo No. 29 — Sparks flat car No. 20, built by Haffner-Thrall Co., with the 6 small cages loaded lengthwise, two abreast. Menagerie wagon No. 28 is at left. Elbirn Collection



Photo No. 34 — Unloaded wagons No. 132, poles, and No. 36, platform, on muddy lot at Windsor, Ontario, May 5, 1947. Elbirn Collection

the Sparks title and colors although in a slightly different design from the other sleepers. The new car was added mainly to provide more space so as to take care of the personnel who had been

Photo No. 33 — Jeep doing pull-over of wagons No. 34, jacks; No. 64, steel and props; No. 74, bandstand, and No. 128, stringers, on flat cars in heavy rain at an Ohio stand. Elbirn Collection



traveling overland as this would not be permitted when the show entered Canada. Everyone would have to ride on the train. Charlie Webb says the Edgars moved into the new car and that Rita Kortes took over their former compartment. Charlie says he also was now able to move into the staff car.

Sparks was now ready to enter Canada with the first stand scheduled for Windsor, Ontario on May 5. Hopefully business would improve. (Note: Concluding portion of article will appear in the next issue)

#### Exhibit C —

#### Sparks Circus 1947 Train Loading Order

##### Flat Car No. 25

- No. 132 — Pole Wagon
- No. 12 — Stake & Chain Wagon
- No. 218 — Case Tractor
- No. 16 — Light Plant Wagon

##### Flat Car No. 24

- No. 238 — Truck

- No. 20 — Side Show Wagon
- No. 228 — Scoopmobile
- No. 248 — Truck

##### Flat Car No. 22

- No. 32 — Cookhouse Wagon
- No. 44 — Cookhouse Wagon
- 6 cages, loaded lengthwise two abreast

- No. 28 — Menagerie Wagon

##### Flat Car No. 21

- No. 24 — End Blues Wagon
- No. 22 — Dog Cage Wagon
- No. 36 — Platform Wagon
- No. 26 — Concession Wagon
- No. 74 — Band Wagon

##### Flat Car No. 20

- No. 38 — Stable Wagon
- No. 120 — Chair Wagon
- No. 54 — Wardrobe Wagon
- No. 18 — Office Wagon

##### Flat Car No. 23

- No. 14 — Starbacks Wagon
- No. 64 — Steel and prop wagon
- No. 34 — Jack Wagon
- No. 128 — Stringer Wagon

##### Stock Car No. 37

##### Sleepers No. 143

147

160

(Note: Sleeper No. 86 added at Toledo, Ohio.)

Note: Contents for various wagons are listed as per the original list from Lewis Diesel, however various wagons did carry equipment of other departments. The big top canvas was loaded on No. 128 Stringer wagon and No. 132 Pole wagon. The office wagon was also the red ticket wagon. Band Wagon No. 74 carried the bandstand, props, instruments, etc. and is not to be confused with any type parade bandwagon.



# GEORGE W. "POPCORN" HALL'S CIRCUSES

By C. Beerntsen

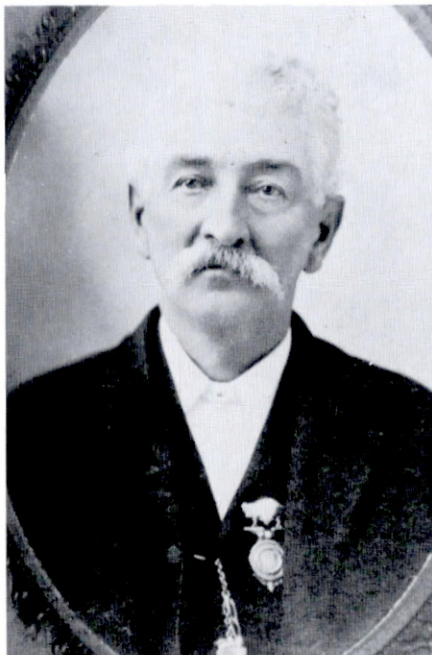
One of the most colorful circus owners in Wisconsin was George Washington "Popcorn" Hall, Sr., of Evansville. He had a varied and eventful history. He began life for himself with no capital but his ambitious spirit and clever brain. He drifted into the show business, found himself fitted for it and made it his life occupation.

Mr. Hall was born in Lowell, Massachusetts, December 5, 1837. His parents were Joseph and Susan Hall, both natives of New Hampshire. The family later moved to Manchester, New Hampshire, and in 1859 came to Rock County, Wis.

George was a restless lad and at the age of ten when the Howe and Cushing Circus arrived by wagon in the little city of Manchester, New Hampshire, George had an uncontrollable longing to be with the circus. From then on, he would run away in the spring, spend the summer with a circus, and then return home in the autumn to spend the winter at home.

Thus began George Hall's circus career, which continued through seven decades. To the circus men of his day and the succeeding generations Hall was known by the title of "Popcorn George". It was a title justly earned and one of which he was proud. His first work with the Howe and Cushing Show was with the "candy butcher". He used to take huge baskets of freshly popped corn around the tent and sell it. He was encouraged by Solon Robinson, one of the editors of the New York Tribune, to go to New York and sell

The Hall show ticket wagon was used as a bandwagon in this parade about 1902. McClintock Collection.



Col. George Washington "Popcorn" Hall, born 1836 died 1918. Author's Collection.

popcorn in the city. When summer was over George went to New York. He sought out Mr. Robinson, borrowed ten dollars, and became a popcorn vendor in the city. He found that he always had a supply of popcorn left at night and eventually had a brilliant idea of making the popcorn into bricks and balls, which proved to be successful and he became known as the inventor of the popcorn bricks and balls. In spite of his successful popcorn venture the call of the sawdust was still strong and he

went back into show business during the summer and would sell popcorn on the trains during the winter. Popcorn in the West was a delicacy in those days and George was able to make a prosperous living.

George was later promoted and became a "barker" for side shows. He later exploited the free show in the "big top". He was considered one of the leading side show orators of his day. George DeHaven, manager of the Great Eastern Show, paid George 250 dollars per week for one entire season for talking at the door.

Hall belonged to the days when the circus was distinct from the menagerie show and was a one-ring affair. The lighting was effected by tallow tips set in tin cups with tin reflectors about the ring. The circus had seats for patrons and gave a ring performance. The menagerie did not, but the genial George explained the wonders in each cage. A menagerie act completed the performance.

Mr. Hall joined the Dick-Sands wagon show in New York in 1860, came by wagon road through Canada into the West, and spent the following winter with his father in Magnolia, Wisconsin. His father had moved to Wisconsin in 1859. George ran a side show for one season and after that followed the side-show business with various organizations for several years. People today would have referred to him as quite a character. At one time he was showing in a small town and was doing the

This large cage was paraded closed and shows the outstanding paint job done on the Hall equipment. Also taken around 1902. McClintock Collection.





"barking" at the door. The crowd was a little slow in buying tickets. George made the announcement that if anyone went into the show and was not perfectly satisfied, he would make it satisfactory. Soon one big fellow came out and said "I am not satisfied". Mr. Hall said to him "Go back in and stay until you are".

"Popcorn" George had a restless and amazing career as owner, in full or in part, or as an employee at many circuses. Some of them include: Baybell, Bailey, Van Amburgh, Orton and Howe's European. He was with Jesse Maybell and after leaving him organized a show of his own, and attached himself to the great Bailey Show, and later in the same season to the Van Amburgh organization. He left that at Cleveland and made the round of the county fairs. He spent the next winter at Magnolia and occupied himself as a trapper. The next season he was with the Orton side show, left them at Mt. Pleasant, Iowa and joined Howe's European Show and when the country fair season came on he made that route. In the late fall he went to Madison, Wis., and had a museum during the winter. He was then with the Frank Howe's show and started another museum combination and conducted it at Madison during the

**This cross cage is representative of those on the show in the period around 1902. McClintock Collection.**

winter. The following year he and John Long, of Janesville, organized a show, which they ran through the lead mining regions of Wis. and came back to Janesville completely bankrupt. Mr. Hall organized it as a side show, put it alongside of the Jim French circus, and traveled in this way until the fair season began. This was the most prosperous year that he had so far experienced. He closed the season with 4,800 dollars and a farm which he had bought and paid for, all after one year.

In 1881 Hall organized the first circus of his own. This was a gilly show moving on one rail car. The show continued moving on the one car until the fall of 1884 when the rail car was abandoned in Jacksonville, Florida in favor of a boat for a tour that took the show to the West Indies and eventually to Mexico when he acquired the title of "Colonel". It was in a Mexican town that he found himself and his show in-

**The George G. Hall Jr. show is shown as it moved overland around 1909, a living wagon is in front and other open baggage wagons follow. Author's Collection.**



volved in a small uprising. He helped the Mexican Army quell the uproar and because of his "bravery and kindness", the people called him Colonel.

By 1888 the show had grown to five cars and was called G. W. Hall's Circus & Bingley's English Menagerie. This show played through the Southern states during the winter of 1888-1889 and met its downfall at Atlanta in March of 1889, when sold to meet back wages of its employees. The claims were less than the amount gained by the sale, and he returned home to Evansville, Wisconsin.

A new organization was then formed with Sam McFlinn, as a partner, this trick being called Sam McFlinn & G. W. Hall's New York Circus. The exact size of this show is unknown but it may have grown to as large as the 15 car class, before being dissolved. McFlinn left the fold early in 1892. Hall continued on his own and the show varied in size averaging about six or eight cars. This show was a one ringer, with a half dozen cages a couple of elephants and a camel or two. The season of 1902 was Hall's last year in the circus business. Following the close of the 1902 tour he sold a few animals to the Sells & Downs show and eight years later offered rail equipment, tents and animals for sale in the BILLBOARD.

"Colonel" Hall made his winter quarters on a farm at the south end of Madison Street in Evansville. He was known as a shrewd but eccentric businessman. While on the road, he would put his money in tin cans, cigar boxes, gunnysacks, or whatever was at hand. He would send the money in these containers to the bank at Evansville. He always sent it by freight. He kept a close eye on his money, but he was generous too and it was said that he had helped build or rebuild every church in town at one time or another, but that he had never been to church in his life!

During his career, "Pop" Hall, as he was often called, and still is by his remaining family today, accomplished many difficult undertakings as a showman. In 1885 he chartered a schooner the "Emma Fox" which carried his show to the West Indies and to South America, showing at all of the windward islands, the Bahamas, Trinidad and then to the main land. He then showed in many cities and towns in the Amazon region.

It was in that same year, 1855, that Mr. Hall married Miss Sarah Wilder. They had four children, George Washington, Jr., Ida, Charles and Jessie. The children took an active part in the circus life of which I will write later.

Colonel Hall loved animals—it has been said that he always had animals in his home, particularly in the winter months. He would train the animals from the time they were babies. Some





**George W. Hall Jr. and his son Frank with their baby elephant "Pearl" around 1900. This photo was taken in the winter quarters at Evansville, Wisconsin. Author's Collection.**

amusing tales have been told of visitors being "scared stiff" at the sight of pythons curled up on the floor, lion cubs behind the stove and monkeys swinging from the chandeliers.

Although the citizens of Evansville were proud to have Colonel Hall, his family and circus in the town, many of the citizens did on different occasions have cause to be much alarmed if not terrified. Colonel Hall had the chance to buy an elephant from the Ringling Brothers circus. It was said to have outweighed the famous Jumbo owned by P. T. Barnum. He weighed three tons and was thirteen feet tall. At the time he was purchased he was the "lead" elephant of the herd. "Big Charley" as he was called was captured in Central Africa and was an ivory producing elephant. He had a very bad temper and caused the keepers much trouble. Ringling Brothers were afraid to take him on the road with the rest of the herd for fear he might cause trouble. It was because of this that he was sold to "Colonel" Hall. At the time of the sale "Big Charley" was wearing one thousand pounds of chain. The "Colonel" removed the chains and taught his daughter Mable to handle and perform with "Big Charley". She was his best friend and the only one who handled him from the time of his purchase until his death in Evansville.

There are many stories told of Charley's misdeeds. One time before "Colonel" George Hall's circus took to the road, an exhibition was given at the park in Evansville. "Big Charley" was chained in the park, but decided to return to his quarters across the town. He pulled up his stake and lumbered through town gaining speed as he went. The residents were afraid of being trampled and no one tried to stop him



**Mable Hall Campbell is shown with the elephant "Charlie" in 1902. She lived from 1878 to 1951. Author's Collection.**

except his keeper who hung on to his tail.

As the years went on, "Big Charley" became more and more unmanageable and finally went insane. "Colonel" Hall decided to have him killed. Many kinds of poison were given "Big Charley" in the attempt to kill him. He was given strychnine in a potato and an apple, but it had no effect on him. He was then given potassium cyanide in a sweet potato and finally it was decided to chloroform him. His grave was dug a short distance from the circus quarters in Evansville on part of "Colonel" Hall's farmland at the edge of the town.

Mr. Hall was very fond of "Big Charley" and he had reaped a great profit from showing him. However, after "Big Charley" had thrown his trainer, Mable — the Colonel's daughter and had also kicked the "Colonel" leaving him with a lame hip, it was decided to kill him before he did more damage.

Another alarming incident which occurred was the time when a leopard

**The band and all performers are shown in front of the marquee of the mud show in 1908. Author's Collection.**







the other hunters fired until the leopard was dead.

The leopard was returned to Evansville where large crowds gathered to see it. It was hung from a lamp post on the corner by the Pioneer Drug Store. It was eight years old and measured about six feet.

I read this account in the local paper of 1901. The paper was then known as "The Tribune". To quote the editor's remarks: — "Everybody seems relieved of the anxiety that has been felt since Sunday of the possibility of meeting the leopard face to face; and the farmers stood in danger of their stock being attacked in the pastures as several sheep have been reported killed during the time it was enjoying its liberty".

"Colonel" Hall divorced his first wife Sarah, partly because she would not take part in the circus life and travel with him. He later married Lou Tolan. Her talents greatly contributed to the circus. She was known professionally as Zula Zangara. She trouped for years and was both a snake charmer and animal trainer, specializing in tigers. Either role was difficult enough but the combination was not equaled by any other performer. The "Colonel" and she had a daughter Mable, whom I have already mentioned, who received fame as the only woman elephant trainer and who also rode trained horses.

With the old circus the clown was the leading feature and "Colonel" Hall was reported to have hired Dan Rice who stood at the head of his profession. Others whose talents contributed to making "Popcorn George" Hall's name known in circus history was Dolores Vallecita, Spanish Lady. Hall trained six leopards for her to perform with doing these acts: the rolling globe, the

**The midway bannerline and side show top are shown in a photo taken around 1902. Author's Collection.**

seesaw, the electric wheel, pyramids and pictures. She ended the act by playing chimes as she played the piano. "Pop" Hall was offered three thousand five hundred dollars for this act but he refused. The cost of running a circus in those days was about a hundred dollars a day.

One of Hall's biggest attractions was Captain Bates and his wife. Captain was eight feet tall and weighed five hundred and fifty pounds. Mrs. Bates was eighty pounds. They were the tallest married couple ever on exhibition.

"Popcorn" George conceived many ideas for the circus.

George W. Hall, Jr., the oldest son of "Popcorn" had grown up in the business and in 1894 took out his own wagon

**Some of the Hall show personnel in front of a concession wagon next to the marquee on the mud show around 1904. Charles Russell Hall, son of George Jr. is shown holding pony. Pfening Collection.**



show. His brother Charles had toured a circus in 1893 and George Junior's equipment may have been that used by Charles the prior year.

George Jr. continued with about an 80-foot top one ring show until turning the show over to his son Frank E. Hall. Frank married into another Wisconsin circus family, the Wintermutes. Frank's show was called Hall & Wintermute prior to its closing in 1917.

A daughter of George Jr., Grace married Howard Bruce and they operated the H. Z. Bruce show from 1914 until 1928. The Bruce's son Mark was a part of the operation of the show and much of the information in this article was gathered from an interview with him.

William P. "High Grass" Campbell (his shows played the high grass county towns, while "Low Grass" Campbell's show played the choice city lots with trimmed fields) married "Popcorn" Georges' daughter Mable. "High Grass" operated a two car show using the Hall title in 1918-1919. In 1920 he was part of Campbell, Bailey & Hutchinson, or the Cold, Broke and Hungry show.



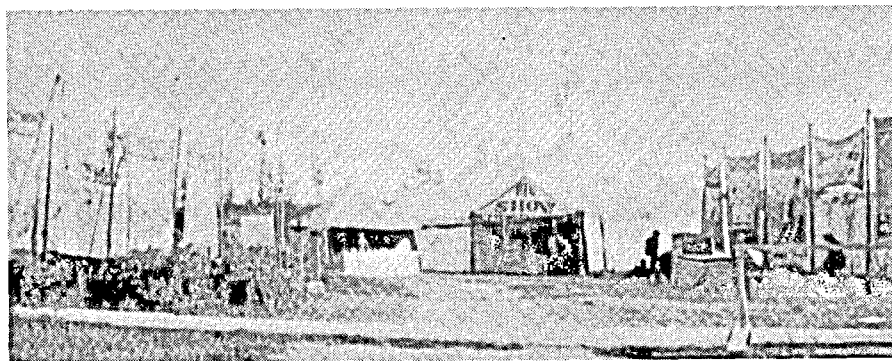
Frank E. Hall was on the two car Hall show of 1918-19 and after it closed he returned to Evansville and organized a truck show. This show used the Vanderburg Brothers title from 1927 to 1937. This was the last show owned by a Hall family member after the 1881 beginning.

"Popcorn George" Hall's daughter Jessie married Frank Macart, a circus showman. They had two children, Fred and Vivian. Jessie later divorced Macart and married Walter S. Gollmar. They had one son, Walter S. Gollmar, Jr. who lives in Evansville in his mother's house and who was very helpful in giving me information for this paper.

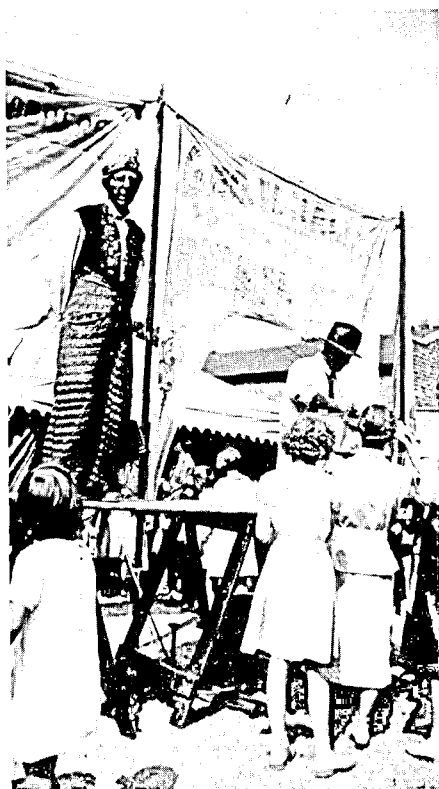
Mr. Walter Gollmar, Jr. said that his mother, Jessie Hall, was a typical circus performer of her day, being adept at many things. These included a trap-eze act, and equestrian act and later on snake charming. At the time of her marriage to Walter Gollmar, she retired from the circus, but continued to take a great interest in circus life. Walter Gollmar was one of the famous Gollmar Brothers who originated in Baraboo. Their circus was world famous. Walter Gollmar, Jr.'s whole family was very much involved with the circus world. He can remember his grandfather — "Popcorn George" and refers to him as Grandpa Pop. He has many things of interest belonging to his Grandfather, his mother and father, including a newspaper article written in 1913 of a reporter interviewing his Grandfather who was then an old man, some hand carved canes which his grandfather brought back from Mexico, old photographs of members of his family taken with animals in the circus, furniture brought back from travels in other countries and numerous other things which give a fascinating insight to the circus.

He was the first to inaugurate the ten cent circus. He was considered one of the leading showmen of his day and is still remembered in the circus world as an outstanding leader in the portable amusement field. He was the last of the old showmen. His circus career lasted for sixty years and it proved to be both exciting and profitable. He invested much of his money in farmland in Wis. and in real estate in Texas and Florida. He retired to a farm in Evansville where he became a successful farmer, being one of the first to introduce the breeding of Poland-China hogs in Rock County and one of the first to encourage tobacco raising on a large scale.

"Popcorn George" had taught all his children to be circus performers and managers, and for three generations there was a "Hall" circus to set up its big top and entertain the multitude of people who each summer went to see the



This is the two car show operated by William P. "Low Grass" Campbell in 1919, using the Col. George W. Hall title. Original photo in Pfening Collection.



The last circus operated by a Hall was Vanderberg Bros. in 1937. Note the banner entrance to side show, it is the same one shown in the photo taken around 1902. Pfening Collection.

circus. The headquarters were still in Evansville, with the circus spending the winter months there.

The descendants, who from children took an active part in the world of sawdust and spangles included his son, George Hall, Jr. who first joined the circus at the age of four, when he traveled with his father and who later founded his own show, as outlined above.

Other descendants who carried on the

circus tradition of the family were another son and three daughters of Mr. Hall, all of whom were prominent in the show world as performers and/or wives of executives in show business, two sons-in-law, both of whom owned their own shows, and three grandchildren. One of the grandchildren — Russell Hall — son of George Hall, Jr. was still in business in the early 1940's and continued to winter his animals and equipment in Evansville.

An interesting story was told to me about George Hall, Jr. and his talking pig act. He was the only trainer to have such an act and allowed no one to know his secret for training the pigs.

His son Frank decided to have a talking pig act too and trained his hogs. His father knew nothing of it until he attended his son's opening stand. Frank confessed that he had learned to train pigs by watching his father through a knot hole in the barn. Training domestic animals became a specialty of Frank's after that. His acts were considered very unusual. He would have hogs, sheep, a goat and a dog doing different tricks in the ring all at one time. The highlight of the act was the goat walking a tight rope high in the air. His show was known as "Frank's Animal Circus".

Evansville can be proud to have had the George Washington Hall family in its midst.

I wish to give credit and thanks to Mrs. Patricia Wall of Evansville, Wis. for the use of her paper entitled "Circus Life in Evansville, Wis.", and to mark Bruce for the use of his photos. Other information came from Richard E. Conover's book Wisconsin's Unique Heritage.

#### HAVE YOU MOVED

If you have changed your address be sure to advise the Bandwagon office of your new address. The Post Office will not forward third class mail, and your copy comes back with a minimum of 8c postage due. It then takes another 8c, or more to forward it on to you. In addition to this extra bother and cost to the CHS you are delayed in receiving your copy.

Please let us have your new address in advance of your move.

# JOSEPH E. WARNER --

## PIONEER OF THE THREE TENT CIRCUS

By Stuart Thayer

Each of the innovations in the conduct of the circus business will seem, once we have them all listed, a natural outgrowth of the previous condition. This is true in most of man's endeavor, be it athletics, the military or double entry bookkeeping. Most of our labors as circus historians deal with what happened, but as we fill in the action we will come to cogitate on why things happened and why the innovator was the person responsible for the change.

As an example, the Mabies are generally considered to have initiated the dining department as a part of the circus. Was this done because of a specific situation? A series of poor accommodations, maybe, or the rising cost of board at the hostleries on the route? They might have had a relative in the wholesale grocery business. These are the speculations we assign to ourselves.

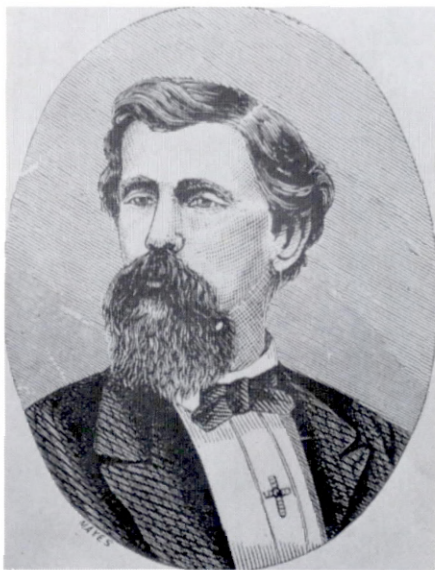
For many years the circus has been divided into arena, menagerie and side-show, each in its separate pavilion. This article will concern itself with the origin of this classic division and the man who was one of the first to use it. The question arose in the author's mind upon reading the published version of a paper given before the Chicago Literary Club in 1924 by Irving K. Pond. In part it read, "Somehow the morals of the menagerie and the art of the circus did not long remain on intimate terms; they were soon divorced and each came to dwell in its own particular tent. Joe E. Warner, onetime mayor of Lansing, Michigan, was one of the first, if not the first, to effect a further separation and he started on the road with a show under three canvasses sheltering respectively, the museum, the menagerie and the circus."

The obvious reason for separating functions is to give each the space it requires. The earliest traveling shows were not big enough to need division, nor did they usually involve more than one of the functions we are concerned with. They tended to be exclusively either a circus, a menagerie or a museum.

The circus began as an exhibition of horsemanship. Clowns and acrobats were added very shortly after the beginning of the genre and gradually the programs were extended to include strongmen, wirewalkers and contortionists. The central axis of the program,

however, was that of the ringmaster, the principal equestrian and the clown, as C. G. Sturtevant has written.

Menageries were originally the showing of single beasts in taverns and inns. Sometimes the animals were trained, often not. The next step was to show several animals and charge an admission instead of passing the hat. In 1789 a caravan of four animals visited New York. From there it was only size that made a difference.



This cut of Joseph E. Warner appeared in the New York Clipper. Conover Collection.

Museum exhibits, not as common as the first two, were also single items, a dead whale, a huge ox, a three-legged chicken, the oddities in creation.

Menageries grew in size, but by the 1830's it was not unusual for a circus to include an exhibition of wild animals and bill itself as a circus and menagerie. The investment for the circus owner was not great (beasts eat more cheaply than men) and the combination was natural since both forms of entertainment travelled overland in wagons.

There developed menageries with a few turns added to their otherwise rather static show; monkey and pony acts were the most common. Both the circus and the menagerie occasionally

carried museum features such as stuffed animals, wax figures or paintings. With the exception of Barnum, who had all the outdated stuff of his American Museum to draw upon, the museums of the early shows were minor.

The circus with an appended menagerie and museum became the form, as we know, but not the ultimate form, as we have seen in the last twenty years. The menagerie and the museum are largely gone now, so is the tent for that matter. It is the circus, the arena performance, that survives. Why should this be? As Pond said, "the morals of the menagerie and the art of the circus". The circus art is ever-changing, ever-interesting, it has the capacity to be improved. The menagerie, on the other hand, is something you only look at. A lion is forever a lion.

Initially, it was all in one tent. We don't know exactly how it was arranged, but some space must have been left without seats so that the caged and platformed features could be viewed. If it occurred to anyone to use separate tents, the expense might have forestalled them. It meant extra wagons and teamsters and teams. It increased the "weight" of the caravan and the bad roads of the times made this an important consideration. The evidence we have of early attempts at multiple tenting do not indicate why it wasn't more popular.

Unlike today, much of the patronage of early circuses came long distances at some inconvenience to decide whether or not they would attend the show. We find much evidence of large crowds on the lot but few ticket buyers. In those poorer times you didn't spend the money just because you were in a place to do so. The owner had to convince you beyond the posters and heralds that brought you to his lot. It became evident to the showman that his physical plant was part of his advertising. The routine of erecting and displaying the theatre in which he was to perform was an adjunct to the performance itself. And the implication had to be that the larger the theatre the greater the show and therefore the patron got more for his money.

One of the earliest references to multiple tenting can be found in Chindahl's "A History of the Circus in America",



and it tells that in 1835 Macomber, Welch & Co. exhibited in three extensive pavilions. They mention the performance, a splendid collection of paintings and other amusements. There is a well-known photograph of the Dan Rice show taken in Jamestown, New York in 1864 which indicates a big top and a side show.

Separation of the arena and the menagerie came a few years later. Fred Bradna claimed that the division came about through the pious American public's refusal to attend Sunday performances, but its willingness to pay a few cents to visit the menagerie on the sabbath. In other words, a division based on the opportunity to pick up a few dollars. This could be so, yet surely it would be as easy to show the menagerie when it occupied the same tent as the arena as to show it separately. It makes more sense to subscribe to a necessity brought about by the number of cages and the desire to make the show appear as big as possible.

An 1855 ad for Signor Chiarini's Circus lists 15 cages, but apparently one tent held the whole show. Forepaugh advertised that in 1867 when his menagerie was in 16 \*dens there was but one tent; in 1868 there were 20 cages and still a single tent, but in 1869 when the menagerie had grown to 25 units the show went out in two tents. Richard Conover in "The Great Forepaugh Show" tells us that the two tent arrangement lasted through 1871. Robert Parkinson in the March, 1962 "Bandwagon" points out that by 1871 John Robinson had separated performance and menagerie. It was in this year — 1871 — that J. E. Warner went on the road with his three tent circus, the Great Pacific.

Warner was born in Elba, Genessee County, New York in 1831 and moved with his parents to Rawsonville, Wayne County, Michigan in 1835. In 1850 he set out on his own and settled in Lansing, the three year old state capital. He found work as a wagon maker with his future father-in-law that year, but appears to have returned to Rochester, New York that winter. In the April 15, 1911 "Billboard" he wrote a biographical sketch of his early days:

"When a boy in my teens I lived in Rochester, N.Y. Among my acquaintances was an old Frenchman by the name of Pullis. He was a sleight-of-hand performer. In winter seasons he travelled about the country, giving entertainments in school houses and country taverns, and in summer time peddled fish about the city. I joined the old professor in one of his winter tours, with the understanding that he was to teach me all the tricks of the trade. As a result, at the age of twenty, I became a full-fledged magician."

In 1851 he went on the road out of

Chicago with a bag full of tricks and an assistant and closed in St. Louis in January 1852. He then went to New Orleans and got a job at Dan Rice's Museum on St. Charles Street. (Rice at this time owned buildings on opposite sides of St. Charles Street, one was Dan Rice's Museum, the other Dan Rice's Amphitheatre). Following a three month engagement with Rice Warner was booked into the Frank Museum in Cincinnati. In May of 1852 he left Cincinnati with a circus "which for nearly forty years was my constant occupation, filling every position from stake driver to proprietor" as he phrased it in "Billboard".

where, after another weeks performance was given, the season closed. I joined the show as assistant agent to Castle. The company returned to Cincinnati, where it disbanded. Salaries, printers and all bills were paid, but the management was left bankrupt."

Warner returned to New Orleans and Dan Rice for the winter of 1853-54 and in the spring of 1854 secured a position as assistant to W.T.B. Van Orden, agent for Spaulding & Rogers' tent show. In mid-season he took over the advance. He remained with the show, in tents and riverboats, for nine years rising to be general agent for 1861 and 1862.



This letterhead of the 1873 Warner Great Pacific Circus was reproduced by Roland Butler.

The circus was not named by Warner in his article, but it appears to have been Whitbeck & Co.'s Original One Horse Show. George Chindahl was of the opinion that this was the season of 1853 and that Warner, eighty years old when he wrote the article, was confused on the dates. If so, the engagement at the Frank Museum may have lasted over the winter of 1852-53. Warner describes his first circus season as follows:

"Harry Whitbeck, a former manager for Dan Rice, Charles H. Castle, former agent for Rice, and Washington Kidwell, a steamboat engineer, formed a partnership and started a circus from Cincinnati in the spring of 1852. We left Cincinnati about May 10, making all the principal towns up to Pittsburgh. Here the show halted for a week. The tents were erected in the front yard of old Ben Trimble's Hotel, in the center of the city. Leaving Pittsburgh the show was transferred to canal boats, and the balance of the season was put in on the line of the Pittsburgh and Erie Canal, making the route as far north as Erie, leaving a few towns to return on to Pittsburgh,

An indication of his concern for duty may lie in his honeymoon trip in 1857. He was married in Lansing and took his bride to New Orleans for two weeks. On the return trip they stopped at Memphis where the "Floating Palace" was berthed and Warner went back to work and his wife found her way home alone. In all fairness, her diary only moans at the separation not the indignity.

In the fall of 1862 Warner was elected City Clerk of Lansing. Apparently the work palled for he appointed his recent opponent to the job in the spring of 1863 and went back on the road. From 1863 through 1866 he was with Dan Rice on two shows. The first was Rice's own of 1863 and the second was the retitled Mabie Menagerie owned by Adam Forepaugh and John V. (Pogey) O'Brien. Rice was the star of both shows. Note that the Forepaugh-O'Brien combine was the show in the Jamestown photo mentioned above. This circus became Forepaugh's Circus & Menagerie in 1867 and Warner was with it. In 1868 he seems to have gone out with the Henry Barnum Van Amburgh show as general agent. He returned to Forepaugh for 1869 and 1870.

Through his acquaintance with Pogey O'Brien on the early Forepaugh ven-



tures Warner obtained that infamous gentleman as a backer for his own show in 1871. O'Brien, whose proclivities and asthma are well known, was always looking for managers for the circuses he invested in and certainly Warner's experience would suggest him for such a job. O'Brien and Patrick Ryan were the owners of J. E. Warner & Co.'s Great Pacific Circus, the one that Pond referred to as going out with three tents. Warner was part owner and general manager. Later information indicates that the circus was formed January 1, 1870 so it was probably in the works during Warner's last year with Forepaugh.

"Something New Under the Sun," the ads read, "Three Big Tents, \$50,000 elephant, 30 cages." Warner had learned well at Forepaugh's knee. He even copied the master's tent diagram in his later ads. "Only Show West of the Alleghanies Using Three Tents."

Who was it that was east of the Alleghanies and using three tents? Perhaps no one, yet possibly he was referring to P. T. Barnum. Barnum's autobiography, final source of nothing very solid, quotes an 1871 review in the Boston Journal, "Immediately after returning from the pageant the cages containing the living wild animals, and all the museum curiosities, are driven under the spacious tents and arranged in regular order, those containing the animals being arranged in the caravan and menagerie, while the others are classified in the museum department . . . very soon the three colossal tents are full to overflowing with anxious spectators."

It appears to be a dead heat. Nothing has been found to indicate that either man thought of the partition himself, though Warner's newspaper copy referred to him as the pioneer in the three tent circus business. Barnum had little to do with the organization of his shows. Apparently, what they both wanted in the way of a circus could only be accommodated in three tents and Warner found it advantageous to advertise the fact. His menagerie appears to have had at most twenty cages and Forepaugh operated with as many as that in a single tent when Warner was still with the show. It could have been a reason as simple as the size of the big top O'Brien provided for him.

In any event he promised "A Monster Museum, A Mammoth Menagerie, A Magnificent Circus. Three Separate Shows all for one Ticket." The show carried a rhino and featured the elephant "Empress". She had been known as "Queen" and a bad actor on the Forepaugh show, went to Poge O'Brien's various ventures through 1881 and then was in succession on Harris' Nickel Plate, George Hall, Gollmar and others leaving a trail of dead men. Today, one wonders why she was allowed to live

so long. Her great size apparently overcame caution whenever she was on the block. Warner advertised that she stood eleven feet, four inches and weighed over six tons.

The roster for 1871 included Charles Fish, a well known bareback rider of that day who later starred for L. B. Lent and P. T. Barnum. Fred Barclay was another bareback rider. Mlle. Elise, a Spanish equestrienne was with it, Ben Maginley was the clown and Hercules Libby the strongman. One of the first female acrobats appeared with the show, Mlle. Bastiani.

## WHITEBECK'S CIRCUS.



IN WHICH WILL BE EXHIBITED AS ADVERTISED,

Will open for one day in Columbus, on Thursday Aug. 3d.

Mons. FRANÇOIS TOURNARE, Equestrian Director.

The members of the Establishment, consisting of a routine of Artists, who have individually figured as the attraction of other establishments, the whole comprising

TWO SPLENDID TROUPE,

PARISIAN AND ANGLO-AMERICAN. The former led by the renowned

Mad. LOUISE TOUANAIRE,

Who, with her highly trained Dancing and Manage horses, COLUMBUS and CHEMELLE, with

Mad. J. JOSEPHINE and ROSALTHE,

Mons. and Mad. BENOIST, &c., &c., formed the bright particular attraction of the "Cirque des Variétés," of Paris. — Also, the far-famed Clowns,

ROCH HARPIER,

The great French Clown, Bottle Imp and Posturer, and

SAM WELSER,

The great Portuguese Trick Clown and Comic Singer.

The brilliant equestrian, JEAN JOHNSON, first and best rider in America, and a host of performers who collectively cannot be equalled by any company in existence!

Admission 25 cents.  
Doors open at 1 and 6½. Performance to commence at 2 and 7½ o'clock, P. M. 1527-461awit

The Whitbeck show was the first circus to provide a job for Joseph E. Warner. This advertisement was used by Whitbeck in 1854. Pfening Collection.

Winter quarters were established at "Beechenbrook" a farm near Lansing. Nine buildings were eventually built there. In November, 1871 the State Republican (Lansing, Michigan) had a long article on the quarters. Over 100 horses were boarded. There were more at another farm in Clinton County. An 80 foot barn with two 40 foot wings housed the horses. The long frame buildings held the wagons. The menagerie was kept in a frame, two story building. Those beasts acclimatized to cold were on the lower floor and the others were caged around a furnace on the second floor. The more tropical the animal's home the closer he was kept to

the heat. The report mentions hyenas, bears, badgers, raccoons, anteaters, kangaroos, ostriches, birds and monkeys as well as single animals, a tiger, wolf, lion, gazelle, eland, zebu, llama, zebra, ibex, moose, reindeer, a dromedary and "Empress". No mention of the rhino is made though one was advertised in 1871 and 1872.

A. J. Forepaugh, the animal trainer, was in charge of all this. A dozen men were permanent help. The expense for the winter is listed at \$6,000 for hay and grain for horses, \$2,000 for the others, \$1,500 for meat for the carnivores and a payroll of \$4,000. Hay and grain had been contracted for the previous spring as an attempt to keep costs down.

A visit to the site of the quarters in September, 1969 disclosed only the main house still standing (see photo). There is nothing left to connect it with its circus past except some inexact information the present owner acquired with the property.

Warner sold his interest in the equipment to O'Brien and Ryan after the 1872 season, but retained ownership of the name. In 1873 he took out J. E. Warner's Great Pacific Museum, Menagerie and Circus as sole owner.

In 1874 he sold part of the show to Andrew H. Springer and A. Henderson. They had been most of a show called Rosston, Springer & Henderson in 1871-72. They had sold out to Forepaugh who used the equipment to launch the Montgomery Queen Circus in 1873. A man named Charles B. Warner might have had an interest in Warner, Springer & Henderson. Vail says so in "The Early American Circus".

Warner leased some of the animals from J. M. French. The show was advertised as Warner & Henderson's Great Pacific combined with Springer's Trained Animals and Egyptian Caravan. The letterhead (see photo) just said Great Pacific. Warner was general director, Henderson the manager, Joe Porter, treasurer and Henry D. Warner (brother) the agent. It was claimed that lighting was by Kidd's patented sunlight apparatus. Paul Schroff was the animal trainer, Albert Aymar the featured clown and "Sultan" the elephant. The season was a disaster and the show wintered at Girard, Pa., Charles Warner had married Dan Rice's ex-wife and Vail says she convinced them to tide over in her home town.

For 1875 the show was titled Springer's Royal Cirqzoolodon, J. E. Warner, manager. The ownership of this outfit is still a mystery. One version has Barnum buying it in Girard and shipping it to Detroit in the fall. Another has George Bushell buying it from Barnum in the spring of 1875. It is certain that some features were leased from Bar-



num. The Detroit Free Press reports that 23 bales of canvas arrived in Detroit from Boston on April 28, forty cages came from Barnum's Hippodrome on April 30 and 43 baggage wagons came overland, possibly from Girard, on April 30. These figures may be inflated, but it is certain that the show opened in Detroit May 3, 1875. If Bushnell bought it he apparently changed the name to G. W. Bushnell's Zoolidan Circus. This became Dan Castello's Centennial Circus in 1876 (centennial of the United States, not of Dan Castello).

In 1876 Warner was manager of the J. E. Warner Circus, but owned none of it. The proprietor was a man named D. B. Lincoln. It collapsed in Tuscola, Illinois in July.

Done once and for all with proprietorship and the use of his own name on a show Warner joined the old Rosston, Springer & Henderson equipment on the Montgomery Queen Circus in 1877 as general agent. He must have tired of show business for at season's end he allowed himself to be elected mayor of Lansing. In those days it was a one year appointment and he served the whole term. In January of 1878 he offered a complete wagon show for sale in the "Clipper". It was apparently the residue of the 1870-74 show and included a bandwagon, 10 horses, 2 tents and harness for 80 horses.

In 1879 he was back on the road, this time with Cooper & Bailey who had just purchased the Howes show. The combine was titled Howes' Great London Circus, Sanger's Royal British Menagerie and Cooper & Bailey's International Allied Shows. This was Warner's first contact with Bailey, it appears, and he stayed with the master showman until Bailey's temporary retirement in 1885. Warner resembled Bailey, short, goateed, an intense cast of eye; but he seems to have been more outgoing, less introverted than his employer. Though he was christened Joseph E. he used the name Joel throughout his career.

When Barnum and Bailey and Hutchinson became partners in 1880 Warner went along. His capacity was as a finder of attractions, today we'd call him a talent scout. He did this for six years and his proudest achievement was the purchase of Jumbo.

Warner related the story in a letter to the "Billboard" dated October 11, 1906: "At the close of the season of 1882 I was selected from among the numerous (sic) of Barnum, Bailey and Hutchinson, the three proprietors of the Great (sic) Show on Earth to make a tour of the old world in search for curiosities, with instructions to get everything and anything that would in my judgement be an attraction for the great show.

Fortified with a letter of credit for seventy-five thousand dollars, with privilege of drawing for more if needed, and several letters of introduction from Mr. Barnum . . . I set sail on the second day of November. On my arrival in London I visited the Zoological Gardens, made myself known to Mr. Bartlett, the superintendent and general manager of the Zoo and in looking over his wonderful collection my attention was attracted to the herd of elephants; several large ones met my gaze, but towering several feet above all was the giant among the fellows, the great elephant Jumbo . . . I at once entered into negotiations for his purchase.

The monthly meeting of the Board of Fellows had just been held (so) I was compelled to wait for another . . . I left for the continent where I got together a herd of seventeen giraffes and various other animals . . .

When I returned to London I found that the board had met and decided to sell Jumbo for 2000 pounds."

Warner later said, "My first great strike was the discovery and purchase of Jumbo."

When he left Barnum & Bailey Warner may have put in one last season with Forepaugh. There is a single reference to his being there in 1886. He retired to Lansing when he left the road and served on the board of fire and police commissioners. He died in 1914, aged 82.

An article in the (Lansing, Mich.) State Journal said, "Joe Warner was just about the most cosmopolitan resident in the city during the last third of the 19th century . . . they said he was one of the best mayors Lansing ever had". His career spanned the years from Dan Rice to Jumbo; it must have been the most interesting period in the history of the circus. He had experience of amphitheatres, riverboats, mud shows and railers. He knew the circus kings—Forepaugh, Bailey, Barnum. He said Jumbo was his greatest strike, but he will possibly be remembered more for what the advance man had the papers print—pioneer in the three tent circus business.

The author wishes to acknowledge assistance from Richard E. Conover Robert Parkinson and the late George Chindahl (whose notes indicate he was planning to write just such a piece) and to thank Miss Virginia Summers, Lansing Public Library, and Mr. Olin Dryer for their interest.

#### OBERT MILLER DIES

The senior Miller of Al G. Kelly & Miller Bros. circus died on October 29, 1969. At age 83 Obert Miller had completed

nearly 50 active years in the white tops. He began with a dog and pony act in the early 1920s and made the 1969 season on the front door of the Carson & Barnes Circus. Before he and his two sons started the Kelly Miller circus in 1937, Mr. Miller had been with many of the big ones of the high grass country, shows like Zellmar Bros., Fowler Bros., Conroy Bros., Bud Hawkins, Atterbury Bros. He was truly a showman of the plains.

During its hayday the Kelly Miller show was as large as any truck show on the road and boasted of a hippo, a rhino, and many as 20 elephants, and was the first truck circus ever to display a giraffe.

A year or so ago the Bandwagon published a history of the Kelly-Miller circus and Mr. Miller enjoyed having the article read to him many times.

He was buried in Showman's Rest in Hugo, Oklahoma.

## FORE AFT



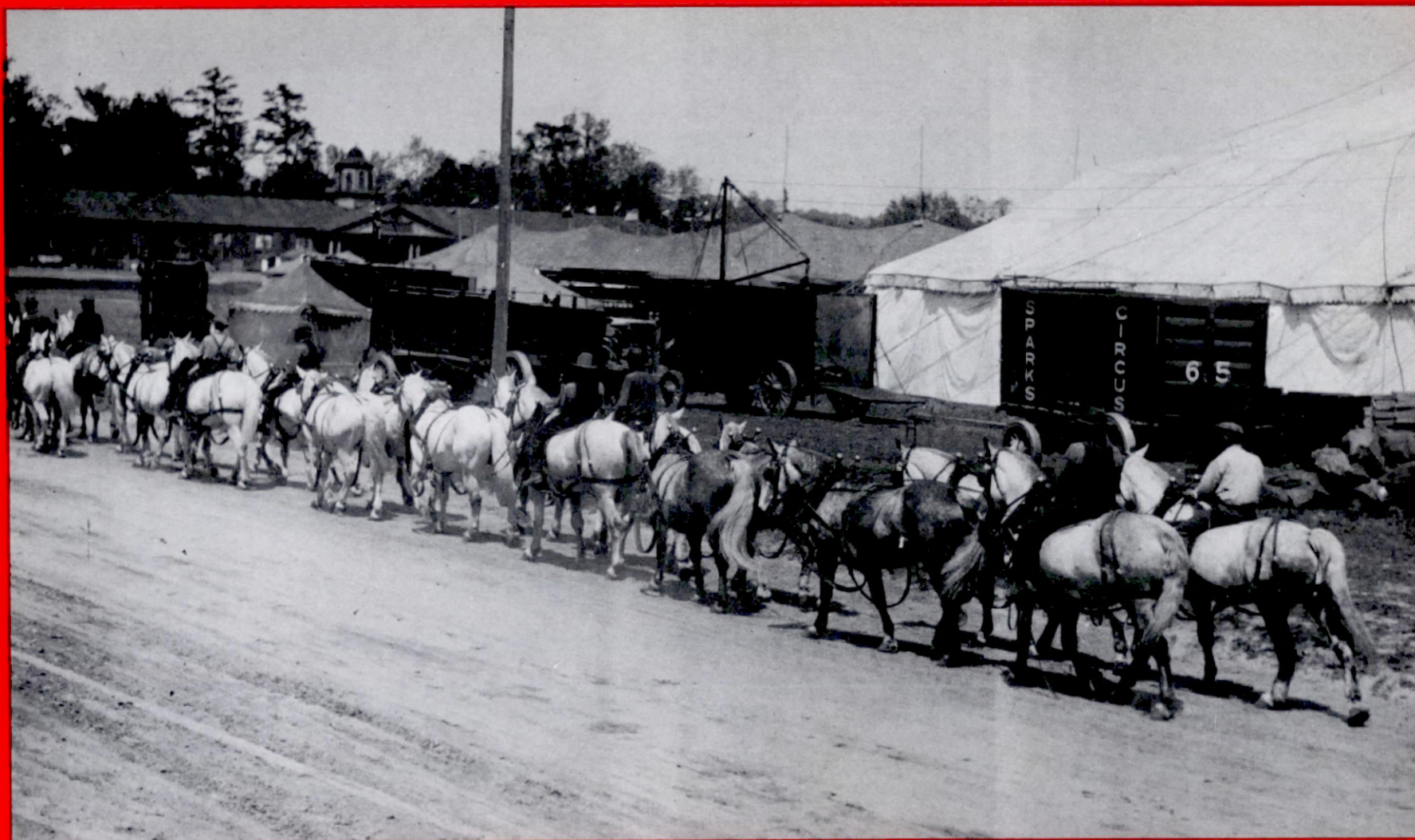
A few prints remain of the fore and aft of the Ringling Hippo.

Perfect for framing. 8 x 10 matte prints.

Set of 2 prints \$1.00  
while supply lasts

Paul R. Tharp  
Box 982  
Loma Linda, California 92354





This interesting photo of baggage stock in the back yard of the Sparks Circus was taken at the opening stand of the 1925 season in the Central City Park winter quarters site in Macon, Georgia.